Jane Lunin Perel



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Jane Lunin Perel, 77, passed away peacefully on February 22, 2024. She was a talented and accomplished poet, a devoted educator, a generous friend, champion, and advocate to many, and the beautiful, loving wife of Dr. Morton L. Perel for over fifty years.

Jane was born on May 28, 1946, in Newton, MA, the daughter of the late Louis and Marion (Rosenblatt) Lunin. Jane graduated from Brookline High School in Massachusetts, in 1964, and

from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1968, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Poetry in 1971. She was the second woman ever to do so at the University.

In the autumn of 1971, Jane was readily welcomed to Providence College as the first poet hired to teach Creative Writing at the College as it transitioned to a co-ed institution, quickly rising to the rank of Professor of English. Jane was a talented teacher who engaged her students with her thorough knowledge, selfless dedication, and openness to the free exchange of ideas between teacher and student as they collectively investigated "the power of Fine Arts [which] gives us faith and helps us to become fully human." Her classes were, unsurprisingly, frequently overenrolled. She taught there for 43 years.

Jane developed a course in Holocaust Literature and was involved in coordinating Holocaust remembrance programs at PC. She was also the Founding Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program, and the Providence College Poetry & Fiction Series, which brought prominent writers to the College to engage with the students and community. Her indelible mark surpassed her retirement in 2014, as many former students maintained contact with her and sought her empathetic advice for years thereafter. In 2015, Jane was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Providence College.

Early in Jane's residence in Providence, she met her soulmate and love of her life, Dr. Morton L. Perel. While she had a positive influence on many, he was her number one fan, regarding her as a Renaissance woman, poet extraordinaire, and the most empathetic woman he ever knew. They had their first date at the Rathskeller, where she gave a poetry reading to the audience. Morton was captivated by Jane's magnetic personality, sense of humor, and extreme good looks. They married shortly after, on December 23, 1973, and were inseparable from that point forward.

Beyond teaching, Jane's gift to humanity was shared through her poetry and boundless creativity. She often quoted her father's inspiring answer "Someone has to write the poems. Why shouldn't it be you?" to whether he thought she could be a poet at the tender age of nine.

Jane was the author of five collections of poetry—The Lone Ranger and the Neo-American Church, Blowing Kisses to the Sharks, The Fishes, The Sea is Not Full, and Red Radio Heart—and her poems were widely anthologized. Over the past three years, she has worked diligently to compose a stunning final manuscript.

Jane was a lifelong dog lover, and animals of all kinds, especially dogs, were drawn to her nurturing presence. She also enjoyed reading and solving mysteries, especially those by Agatha Christie and P.D. James, a hobby passed down from her beloved father; studying the works of Ukrainian playwright Sholom Aleichem; and watching nature documentaries from which she recharged her inner strength, knowing she was a small piece of the great Earth's evolution and story.

Jane is predeceased by her parents, Louis and Marion (Rosenblatt) Lunin, and her sister, Lesley Mehlman, whom she loved. She is survived by her loving husband and soulmate, Dr. Morton L. Perel, her sister Andrea Sigurdsson, and many extended family members and beloved friends.

Funeral services will be held on Sunday, February 25, 2024, at 1:00 PM at Sugarman-Sinai Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope Street, Providence, RI with burial to follow at Lincoln Park Cemetery. For more information and condolences, www.sugarmansinai.com.

Posted online on February 23, 2024
Published in Providence Journal

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