Briefly It Enters, and Briefly Speaks

I am the blossom pressed in a book,
found again after two hundred years. . . .

    I am the maker the lover and the keeper. . . .

When the young girl who starves
sits down to a table
she will sit beside me. . . .

I am food on the prisoner's plate. . . .

I am water rushing to the wellhead,
filling the pitcher until it spills. . . .

    I am the patient gardener
of the dry and weedy garden. . . .

I am the stone step,
the latch, and the working hinge. . . .

I am the heart contracted by joy. . . .
the longest hair, white
before the rest. . . .

    I am there in the basket of fruit
presented to the widow. . . .

I am the musk rose opening
unattended, the fern on the boggy summit. . . .

    I am the one whose love
overcomes you, already with you
when you think to call my name. . . .

Poem by Jane Kenyon, used with permission. Printed in the Welle Book Arts Studio on the occasion of the College of Saint Benedict's Centennial celebration and the presentation of the Legacy Award to the Welle family, June 2013. Printed by Margaret Roesler with the assistance of Sienna Kuhn and members of the Welle family on handmade abaca paper.