

she: robed and wordless, by Lou Ella Hickman

Books in the [July 6, 2016](#) issue

In Review



she

By Lou Ella Hickman

Press 53

This slim volume of poetry gives voice to the women of the Bible, named and unnamed. Lou Ella Hickman, a nun and spiritual director, vividly depicts human nature with resignation, empathy, and expectation. Gomer, Hosea's wife, sighs:

“marriages are often tangled affairs / like vines overgrown, dying.” Ruth says of Naomi: “life like bitter herbs / made me need her loneliness.” Peter and Andrew’s mother laments: “they’re gone / both of them / like moths to a candle.” But alongside the stark realism there is joy, a sense of gratitude. Mary recalls after Joseph’s death that “he, too, was my treasure / . . . such was our secret.” The woman on the road to Emmaus rejoices as “absence breaks like bread into presence / our sleepwalking wakes.” Like a “whisper in the shimmering silence,” hope is quietly tangible.