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**Pilgrim**  
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## Eva Heisler

### PILGRIM

The coal damp, you must nurse the fire with paraffin, candle-ends, sugar, margarine—anything that will burn. On your knees a stack of loose sheets: you "x" the commas, place-names, *Vera*. Into the fire go snapshots and postcards. No trappings, but a turning—*Miriam conjugates the verb* to be. The bleached day and the ragged night you pilgrim rooms stained by water and ink: like gold thread a crack shines in the window's upper pane; thin ringers peel an egg.

To "spend a life"—as if a life, its years, were currency ... What does one buy with a life? A stone wrapped in paper; words on the margins of an old map—