

21

by Karen Eileen Sikola

Five girls wobble into the train car. Their blistered feet protrude from the bedazzled straps of their sandals.

Conductor: "Girls in the back with the open containers, you can't have those on the train."

A heavy-set girl in a belted yellow mini-dress stumbles backward toward the open side door, chucks her plastic Celtics cup on Harvard

Ave., and readjusts the feathered tiara stuck in her tangled hair.

"I'm 21, bitches," she announces.

At the next stop, the posse exits, nearly knocking down an old woman

whose arms are weighed down with plastic bags.

We look at each other. We are somewhere in between 21 and dying, but we say nothing of this.

