

Sheila #1

~~GREG. (coming forward) My real name is Sidney Kenneth Beckenstein.
My Jewish name is Rochmel Lev Ben Yokov Meyer Beckenstein,
and my professional name is Gregory Gardner.
Very East Side, and I do not deny it. I'm 32.~~

~~CASSIE. (steps out) Cassie ... Ah ... Zach, could I talk to you for a minute?~~

~~ZACH. Sure, go ahead.~~

~~CASSIE. Well, I mean privately. (She starts for the steps to the aisle.)~~

~~ZACH. Not right now, Cassie. I'm running about an hour behind.~~

~~CASSIE. Well, I know, but I ...~~

~~ZACH. Next.~~

CASSIE goes back to the line.

Start SHEILA. (stepping forward) I'm Sheila Bryant. Really Sara Rosemary Bryant,
which I really hate. I was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
And I'm going to be thirty real soon. And I'm real glad. (She backs into line.)

~~BOBBY. (stepping downstage) I'm Robert Charles Joseph Henry Mills III,
that's my real name too. I come from upstate New York, near Buffalo,
I can't remember the name of the town ... I've blocked it out.
I was born 25 years ago. (Back to line.)~~

~~BEBE. (forward) My name is Bebe Benzenheimer and I know, I gotta change it.
I'm twenty-two. I come from Boston, and here I am. (Embarrassed, she backs into line.)~~

~~JUDY. My name is Judy Turner. My real name is Lana Turner. (Laughing at her own joke.)
No, no, no, no, no — it's always been Judy Turner. I'm 26 years old.~~

~~JUDY backs up, RICHIE starts but, JUDY stops him and goes on.~~

~~JUDY. (continued) Oh, I was born in El Paso ... El Paso, Texas.~~

~~ZACH. Good. Next.~~

~~RICHIE. (steps out of line) My name is Richie Walters. I'm twenty-seven.
I was born on a full moon in Herculaneum, Missouri. And I'm black.~~

~~AL. I'm Alan Deluca. I'm thirty and I come from the Bronx. (pumps the air—not in PB)~~

~~KRISTINE. I'm Kristine Urich, Kristine Evelyn Urich,
and I'll be 23 on September 1. (She backs into line.)~~

~~AL. (to KRISTINE) Tell him where you're from.~~

~~KRISTINE. (takes a step forward) Oh — I'm from St. Louis, Missouri.
(She goes back to the line; AL prompts her.)~~

start →

SHEILA. (*remaining in line*) Yeeees? You want me?

ZACH. Yes.

SHEILA. (*to the GROUP, but more to BOBBY*) He wants me.

ZACH. To talk.

Music in. SHEILA steps forward.

No. 8

Introduction: "At The Ballet"

(Orchestra)

SHEILA. (*over music*) Right. What do you want to know about me first?

ZACH. Try, ah, why are you in this business?

SHEILA. Well ... I wanted to be a prima ballerina. (*Grimaces at the spotlight.*)
That light ... What color is that? Do you have anything softer?

ZACH. Don't worry about the lights ... Just talk.

SHEILA. Well ... Like I said, I wanted to be a ballerina. Because my mother
was a ballerina — until my father made her give it up.

ZACH. Sheila, come downstage.

SHEILA walks downstage seductively, one step.

ZACH. (*continued*) Closer.

SHEILA. (*walks further downstage*) Can I sit on your lap?

ZACH. Do you always come on like this?

SHEILA. No, sometimes I'm aggressive ... Actually, I'm a Leo ...

ZACH. What's that supposed to mean?

SHEILA. It means the other eleven months of the year
have to watch out ... I'm very strong.

ZACH. Maybe too strong.

SHEILA. Am I doing something you don't like, I mean,
you told me to be myself.

ZACH. Just bring it down.

SHEILA. Bring what down?

ZACH. Your attitude. Tell me about your parents.

SHEILA. My parents?

ZACH. Your father.

SHEILA. Him?

ZACH. Your mother.

SHEILA. My mother ... My mother was raised like a little nun.
She couldn't go out — she couldn't even babysit.

ZACH. Sheila, don't perform ... Just talk.

SHEILA. (*in monotone*) But she wanted to be a dancer and she had all these scholarships and all that. And when she got married, my father made her give it up ... (*breaking monotone, to THE LINE*) ... Isn't this exciting? And then she had this daughter — me — and she made her what she wanted to be. And she was fabulous the way she did it ... Do you want to know how she did it?

ZACH.⁵ Yes ... But first, your hair ...

SHEILA. What? You don't like it.

ZACH. No ... Let it down.

SHEILA. (*taking the pins out*) That's what I've been trying to do.
(*SHEILA shakes her hair down.*) Better ...?

ZACH. Better ... Go on.

SHEILA. Oh, how she did it ... Well, first, she took me to see all the ballets.
And then, she gave me her old toe shoes — which I used to run down the sidewalk in — on my toes — at five. And then I saw "The Red Shoes" —

The GIRLS OF THE LINE respond.

SHEILA. (*continued*) — and I wanted to be that lady, that redhead.
And then, when she saw I really had to dance, she said,
"You can't do it until you're eight." Well, by then, I was only six,

Music fades out.

SHEILA. (*continued*) and I said, "But I've got to dance."
(*to the GROUP*) I mean, anything to get out of the house.

ZACH. What?

SHEILA. Nothing.

ZACH. What did you say?

SHEILA. I just said that I wanted to get out of my house.

ZACH. Why?

SHEILA. The truth?

ZACH. Sure, you're strong enough.

Music in as dialogue continues.

⁵ See Appendix C for scene change/variation.

No. 9

"At The Ballet"

(Sheila, Bebe & Maggie)

SHEILA. (*over music*) Well ... Let's face it ... My family scene was — ah ... not good!*Lights go out on THE LINE.*ALL EXCEPT SHEILA *back up, turn, walk to back wall, facing upstage.*SHEILA. (*sung*) Daddy always thought that he married beneath him.

That's what he said, that's what he said
 When he proposed he informed my mother
 He was probably her very last chance.
 And though she was twenty-two,
 Though she was twenty-two,
 Though she was twenty-two
 She married him.

Refer to Cut

Life with my Dad wasn't ever a picnic.
 More like a "Come as you are."
 When I was five I remember my mother
 Dug earrings out of the car.
 I knew that they weren't hers, but it wasn't
 Something you'd want to discuss.

He wasn't warm.
 Well, not to her.
 Well, not to us ...

But ev'rything was beautiful at the ballet.
 Graceful men lift lovely girls in white.
 Yes, ev'rything was beautiful at the ballet.
 Hey!
 I was happy at the ballet.

SHEILA. (*spoken over music*) That's when I started class ...*BEBE turns and walks downstage, where she is picked up in a spotlight.*SHEILA. (*sung*) Up a steep and very narrow stairway

SHEILA & BEBE. To the voice like a metronome.
 Up a steep and very narrow stairway.

SHEILA. It wasn't paradise.

BEBE. It wasn't paradise.

SHEILA & BEBE. It wasn't paradise.

Start

18 Slow 4 19 20 Valse Andante 21

warm. Well, not to her, Well, not to us. But

A (Cl., Hp., Vibes) MUTE (Tpts.)

(Tbns.) (Hp.) (+Gtr.)

(Bass)

22 23 24 25

ev - 'ry-thing was beau-ti-ful at the bal - let.

(Fls., Ob. 8va) (Cl., Hp.) Trl.

26 27 28 29

Grace-ful men lift love-ly girls in white. Yes,

(8va.) (+VIBES.) (Hp.)

30 31 32 33

ev - 'ry-thing was beau-ti-ful at the bal - let. Hey! I was loco

(Hp., Vibes) (Cl.) (Tbns.) R.H. Fender Rhodes

Stop

34 hap - py (Fls., Cl.) at the bal - let. 35 36 Spoken: that's when I started class... 37

Ob. (+Ww., Bells) Sva. (Tbns., Hp.) Trl. (Hp., Gtr.)

38 SHEILA: Up a steep and ver - y nar - row stair - way. 39 40 SHEILA & BEBE: To the voice like a met - ro -

(Tbns.) F.A.H., Gtr., D.S.

41 (Bs.) w/pick nome. TIN OCTAVES 42 SHEILA: Up a steep and ver - y nar - row stair - way. 43 It

44 BEBE: was - n't par - a - dise, it was - n't par - a - dise, it was - n't par - a - dise, Piano 45 SHEILA & BEBE: 46

w.w. Hr. (Tbns.) (Bs.) Hr.