

Scene Breakdown – “A Chorus Line”

“A Chorus Line” is set in a Broadway theater in 1975, where they are making auditions for an upcoming Broadway show. The performers are competing to get a role for this upcoming performance. The musical “A Chorus Line” opens in the Broadway theater as the director and choreographer Zach is holding auditions for an upcoming new production. Zach and his assistant choreographer, Larry teaches a jazz piece assigning the dancers a number and putting the dancers in groups. Every dancer is in a desperate need for work (Opening: “I Hope I Get It”). Zach makes several cuts leaving seventeen dancers Don, Maggie, Mike, Connie, Greg, Cassie, Sheila, Bobby, Bebe, Judy, Richie, Al, Kristine, Val, Mark, Paul and Diana. Zach asks the dancers to introduce themselves. After, Zach tells to the dancers he is looking for four boys and four girls. Zach now questions the dancers telling them to take it as an interview because he wants to know them as people, not just as performers. The dancers reveal their stories in chronologically order from early life experiences through adulthood that shaped their lives and make them to become performers.

The first dancer is Mike, he explains that he comes from a big Italian family, the youngest of twelve children. His mother used to take his sister to dance lessons every Saturday. Mike found out that he could do it too, one day he took his sister place when she refused to go to class and stayed (“I Can Do That”). Then it’s Bobby’s turn. He tries to hide the unhappiness of his childhood by making jokes reveling that in his youth he used to perform bizarre recitals, in one of them a boy was taken to the hospital after Bobby spray painted him silver (“... And ...”). Sheila is next and Zach is angered because his having a hard time with her attitude. Sheila reveals that her mother was a dancer until she married at a young age, and her father didn’t care for them and didn’t loved them. Sheila escaped her difficult situation through ballet providing her with relief. She is joined by Bebe, her mother criticized her looks growing up. Bebe aspire to become a beautiful ballet dancer. Maggie joins the trio confessing that her parents didn’t love each other, so she turned to dance (“At The Ballet”). After the trio is complete. Kristen shares her journey which includes her natural talent in dance and her lament that she could never sing.

Her journey is revealed with the help of his husband Al as he interrupted her by finishing her phrases in tune (“Sing”).

The interrogation continues, the performers begin to open more and talk about the changes during the adolescent lives. Mark, the youngest of the dancers shares that when he was a young boy, he found out about the human body anatomy through a medical text book and his first wet dream, (“Montage, Part 1: Hello Twelve, Hello Thirteen, Hello Love”). The other dancers open up about their adolescence experiences. Connie reveals her problems of being short and young, revealing her real age.

Diana Morales shares her story about her horrible experience at her high school of performing arts (“Montage, Part 2: Nothing”). Mr. Karp her acting teacher would make the students simulate real activities in class, including one annoying exercise: bobsledding. Diana tried to be part of the scenes but she couldn’t make it a reality. She prayed to truly feel the scenarios after Mr. Karp told her she would never become a real actor. A voice told her that Mr. Karp was the problem not her.

Don goes into a story about his first job at a nightclub, his curious teenage relationship with an older dancer (“Montage, Part 3: Mother”).

Judy recalls practicing kissing for the first time, then Greg speaks about his discovery of his homosexuality (“Montage, Part 4: Gimme the Ball”). Richie recounts his love for basketball, how he almost became a kindergarten teacher and eventually got into dance. Finally, Val enhance her Broadway success by explaining that talent is not everything with casting directors, that silicone and plastic surgeries really helped (“Dance: Ten; Looks: Three”). Zach want Paul to open a little bit more, however Paul doesn’t want to talk about his deceased sister.

The dancers are dismissed and go downstairs to learn a song for the next section of the audition. And yet Cassi, former Zach’s girlfriend stays onstage. Zach confronts Cassie, and tells her that she is too good for the chorus and she shouldn't be at this audition. Cassie is a professional dancer, with some notable successes as a soloist but she reveals that her attempts to be an acting star in Los Angeles were a terrible failure (“The Music and the Mirror”). They briefly touch in their complicated relationship. Cassie hasn't been able to find a soloist work, making it her come back to New York City to start again as a performer. Zach sends her downstairs with the other dancers to learn the dance combination.

Later Zach calls Paul onstage and he finally opens up. He narrates his early career in drag, and the incident where his parent's saw him in drag. The story causes Paul break down and he is comforted by Zach. The dancers return to the audition ("One"). Cassie and Zach's complex relationship resurfaces during the run-through, making Zach to confront Cassie why she left him. Cassie points out it was Zach's obsession with his own career. Cassie request to Zach that she wants to be treated like the other dancers. They move to the next dance, the tap choreography. Paul falls and hurts his knee that recently went to surgery. Lori takes him to the hospital. Zach asks the remaining dancers what they will do when they can no longer dance anymore. The dancers reveal their innermost feelings ("What I Did for Love"). Zach finally comes to select the final eight dancers: Cassie, Val, Diana, Judy, Mike, Richie, Mark and Bobby. Everyone returns for one last number ("Bows")