

PAUL (Continued)

I mean I could turn, anything my first audition. And they said to me: "You're too short to be a boy, would you like to be a pony?" And I said: "What's that?" And they said: "A girl." "What do I have to do?" "Show us your legs." "But I have hair on my legs." "That's okay, come on upstairs." So I went and they hiked up my dungarees and they put on a pair of nylon stockings and high heels. It was freaky. It was incredible. And then they brought me back downstairs and they said: "Oh, you have wonderful legs." I said: "Really? .. Terrific ... "

It's so strange thinking about this. It was a whole lifetime ago. I was just past sixteen. Anyway, then there was this thing of me trying to hide it from my parents. That was something. 'Cause I had to buy all this stuff. Like, ah, shoes to rehearse in, earrings, makeup. And I would hide it all and my mother would find it. I told her there was this girl in the show and she didn't want her mother to know what she was doing and I was holding this stuff for her. She believed me.

Well, I was finally in show business. It was the asshole of show business -- but it was a job ... Nothing to brag about. I had friends. But after a while it was so demeaning. Nobody at the Jewel Box had any dignity and most of them were ashamed of themselves and considered themselves freaks. I don't know, I think it was the lack of dignity that got to me, so I left. Oh, I muddled around for a while. I worked as an office boy, a waiter -- But without an education, you can't get a good job. So, when the Jewel Box called and asked if I'd come back, I went.

START

We were working the Apollo Theatre on a Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street. Doing four shows a day with a movie. It was really tacky. The show was going to go to Chicago. My parents wanted to say goodbye and they were going to bring my luggage to the theatre after the show. Well, we were doing this oriental number and I looked like Anna May Wong. I had these two great big chrysanthemums on either side of my head and a huge headdress with gold balls hanging all over it. I was going on for the finale and going down the stairs and who should I see standing by the stage door ... my parents. They got there too early. I freaked. I didn't know what to do. I thought to myself: "I know, I'll just walk quickly past them like all the others and they'll never recognize me." So I took a deep breath and started down the stairs and just as I passed my mother I heard her say: "Oh, my God." Well ... I died. But what could I do? I had to go on for the finale so I just kept going.

(MORE)

PAUL (Continued)

After the show I went back to my dressing room and after I'd finished dressing and taking my makeup off, I went back down stairs. And there they were standing in the middle of all these ... And all they said to me was please write, make sure you eat and take care of yourself. And just before my parents left, my father turned to the producer and he said: "Take care of my son ... " That was the first time he ever called me that ... I ... ah ... I ... ah.

(PAUL breaks down)

END

[3 SLOW BEATS THEN:

20/

END OF PAUL'S SCENE
(Orchestra)

(During music ZACH comes down the aisle up on stage, crosses to PAUL, puts an arm around his shoulder and walks a few steps Up Left talking to him but he don't hear)

LARRY

(Entering from Right) [BAR #8]

Zach, you ready for them yet?

(ZACH signals "no" with his hands continues to talk to PAUL, then ...)

[ZACH DROPS HAND -- MUSIC SEGUE INTO:

Opening underscore music for number 21, ONE starts and music is continuous until CHORUS LINE starts the eight counts of eight below)

ZACH

Alright, bring 'em in

(Crosses to stool Down Right. PAUL crosses to first wing right and drops his dance bag)

LARRY

Okay, kids, here we go. Everybody in.

(The rest of the GROUP enter Up Right. Upstage black panels revolve to mirrors as THEY enter)