Leanne’s lips twisted into a cold smile. “What do you think happened, sweetie? I turned you into a woman. You’re all girl, from the crown of that glorious head of hair to the manicured tips of your pretty little toes, and the fresh-from-the-package womanhood you’ll find between your legs. And the womb it rode in on. Or with. Whatever.”

Virgil stared into the mirror. “I don’t get it.”

“Do I have to spell it out? You’re female, you’re fertile, and some nice man is going to be shocked out of his socks when he finds out that a hot babe like you has been saving herself for marriage. Or at least the promise thereof.”

“But—why would you do this to me? And, er... how? Isn’t stuff like this supposed to be impossible?”

“Obviously not. Look at yourself.” She strolled over to the window and gazed out. “I know, you’re probably thinking that you must’ve hooked up with a nasty old witch or some such nonsense. Would that it were so. In reality, what did this to you is the power of your own mind.”

Virgil pawed at the hair half-covering his left eye, but it wouldn’t stay tucked up. “I still don’t get it.”

Leanne laughed. “I’m not surprised. You weren’t much of a boyfriend. Cute as a bug, but not a lot going on upstairs. You’ll do much better as a bit of fluff.”

Virgil sank onto the stool in front of Leanne’s vanity. “Is, uh... isn’t this the sweater dress your mom bought you?”

“It is indeed. I never much liked it, but it does seem to suit you. So you’re welcome to it, with my blessing.”

He plucked at the tight hem that nearly bound his knees together. “But—why am I wearing it?”
“You put it on yourself, not half an hour ago, when I told you to. Along with the bra and panties underneath, and that silk slip that’s just a little too small for me, and that gently used pair of stockings you’re staring at. They’re sheer black thigh-highs, in case you’re wondering. With lace tops. They go nicely with the slingback heels, don’t you think?”

He eyed his nylon-encased legs. “Why would I put all this stuff on just because you told me to? It don’t make sense.”

“Let’s just say you weren’t in your right mind.” She moved to the bed, sat down and crossed her own nylon-clad leg at the knee. “What’s the last thing you remember?”

He looked confused, then embarrassed. “Oh, crap. I… uhm… couldn’t get it up. So you hypnotized me.” He glanced toward the window. “Say, why it is daylight outside?”

“That was last night. You spent a solid eight hours right here in bed, in a deep trance. Not the most lively sleep-over ever, but watching you turn into a woman was interesting.” He shook his head. Long tresses bounced in response. “I don’t remember any of that,” he muttered. “Like I said, it was a deep trance. Come morning, I had trouble bringing you out of it. You were still highly suggestible when I told you to wear the clothes I picked out. Then we worked on your makeup, and after that you seemed to wake up on your own. It’s the sort of thing you can’t rush, I suppose.”

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“Like I said, it was a deep trance. Come morning, I had trouble bringing you out of it. You were still highly suggestible when I told you to wear the clothes I picked out. Then we worked on your makeup, and after that you seemed to wake up on your own. It’s the sort of thing you can’t rush, I suppose.”

He looked at her with pleading eyes. “But weren’t you gonna help me with—with my problem? So we could make love?”

She rolled her eyes. “What would be the point? You weren’t exactly Hercules down there. And as you might recall, stamina was sort of an issue as well. No, I think you’ll do much better as a woman. Hair like that is bound to turn heads.”

Virgil’s gaze returned to the mirror. “I still can’t—” He licked his lips and swallowed. “She is pretty, I guess.”

“No need to guess. You definitely are.” She inspected her nails. “Actually, you’re the woman you would’ve been if you were born female in the first place. And you took care of your figure all the years since. And made regular trips to the beauty parlor. Hair doesn’t get that pretty on its own.”

He stroked his thick mane with both hands, then noticed the crimson nails that tipped his fingers. “Didn’t you, uhm… say something about me doing this to myself?”

“Yes indeed. Your mind did the heavy lifting. All I did was turn it loose.” She adjusted the hem of her skirt. “It’s a little known fact that we create our own reality. Mind over matter. Not over the outside world, of course, just our own bodies.”

“What’s that mean? We can turn into whoever we want?”

“It’s not that simple. No one has conscious control. The powers are buried deep in our subconscious mind. That’s how we can improve our health just by thinking about it the right way.” She shrugged. “But I can no more turn myself into Marilyn Monroe than you could turn yourself into JFK.”

“But you turned me into a woman. You said so.”

“I made it happen.” Her cold smile returned. “After I put you under, I forced you to get in touch with your deepest self. Turns out, there was a girl down there. Call her your inner diva. The woman you coulda, woulda, shoulda been if your mother’s womb had poured a bit more estrogen into the mix. Well, that girl wanted out in a big way. There was no stopping her.”

Virgil’s eyes grew. “The woman I should’ve been?”

“You got it. The woman within. I let her out.”

“You let her out…” Slowly his head turned, drawn to the image
of his new and very female self. Red lips parted. “Vanessa,” he whispered. “That would’ve been my name. If I was a girl.”

“News flash, sweetie. You are a girl.” Leanne stood behind her former boyfriend and their eyes met in the mirror. She smiled. “Time to switch pronouns, don’t you think?”

Vanessa bit her lip. “I guess so.” Her shoulders stiffened and she touched the flux of soft hair draped over her right breast, then the breast itself. Fingers lingered over the tip. Her head jerked slightly. “Oh my… I really am a girl.”

“You look a lot like your mother,” Leanne said, “in those old pics you showed me. Only your hair’s longer.”

“I know. She always wanted hair like this, but her parents didn’t approve. She told me that once. More than once.” Vanessa gave her head a quick shake, then set to finger-combing her long tresses where they tumbled past her shoulders.

“Maybe she was dropping hints.”

“Like maybe she wanted me to have long hair?”

“You never know. I bet she wanted a daughter. Most mothers do.” She helped tidy the girl’s mane where it enveloped her arms. “I’ll talk to them,” she added. “Your Mom and Dad. I’ll tell them who you are and what happened.”

The girl’s mouth ohed open. “Oh wow… I didn’t think of that. Like, no one even knows I exist. What am I gonna do?”

“Chill out. I know a guy down at city hall. A certain judge owed him a favor. I got them to put through your change-of-gender paperwork and issue you a new birth certificate. Certified and everything.” She opened her dresser drawer and produced a decorated document printed on parchment paper.

Vanessa read it over and her jaw dropped. “It says I’m female,” she gasped. “Given names: Vanessa Jolene. That’s my mother’s middle name.” She looked wonderingly at Leanne. “You did all this while I was sleeping?”

“Not exactly. Red tape takes time. I made the arrangements last week. But as you can see—” She handed over the papers that had been signed by a judge. “The ruling goes into effect as of right now. The public notice they require is in today’s issue of the Times. It’s out there now,” she said, gesturing toward the outside world. “This isn’t something you can keep secret.”

Vanessa frowned, staring at the documents. “But… doesn’t this mean you knew I was going to turn—”

“Oh, give it a rest! The two of us could go round and round all day about who knew what and when, but none of that matters. Let’s focus on what’s important, okay? This document will get you a new driver’s license, and you can take it to the bank and get your accounts and credit cards switched over to your new name. Same deal for your apartment and your school records and whoever else gives a crap.”

“Yeah, I guess… that’ll work for people I don’t see very much. But what about my friends, and the people at work? How am I supposed to explain all these changes?”

Leanne hauled the girl to her feet. “You worry too much. Just tell them you had the operation months ago and you’ve been hiding the changes under thick clothes and a bit of padding here and there. Your hair is the best extensions money can buy, and you just had a huge makeover from a fancy salon. What are they gonna say? Oh, it must be magic? Gimme a break.”

She ushered the girl to the front door. “Anyhoo, off you go and good luck out there. Call me when you get settled. We’ll do lunch.” She shut the door and leaned against it, heaving a long sigh. “And now, on to the next patsy,” she muttered. There was so much to do. A world of women does not make itself.