“Well, I certainly hope not. I realize that not every magical incantation has such a drastic effect, but as it happens the gender change spell does. It has to do with the fact that the living entity you turn into is human—someone with memories and a history, who has all sorts of connections with other people. The spell you had to go and cast changed all of that, so everyone who ever knew you now only remembers you as a girl.”

“Yeah, so I gathered. Everyone except you and me, looks like.”

“Yes, because you cast the spell and it was my book. If you’d turned yourself into a cat or a werewolf or some such, I’d be able to reverse the spell easily. As it is, all I can do is make you look presentable. I’ll do your makeup next. The spell I cast a few minutes ago means that while I work you’ll gain the knowledge of how to do this for yourself.”

“I guess that’s why all this hair stuff is already starting to seem familiar. Does that mean I’m gonna end up being an expert beautician like you?”

“Actually, it does. The more time you spend around me, the more of my knowledge you’ll gain. That includes the instinctive knowledge I have of what it means to be a woman—the habits and attitudes you would’ve learned from me over the years if you’d actually been born female.”

“Wow, that’s really… incredible. Does this mean I’m turning into you?”

“Dear, sweet Patricia… No, of course not. You’re going to be your own woman. I wouldn’t have it any other way. Let’s just say, you’re going to be a chip off the old block, as the saying goes. You’ll make me proud.”

“I guess that’s a big improvement over the screw-up I used to be, huh?”

“Goodness, I hadn’t thought of it that way, but… I suppose that’s true. Don’t get me wrong, I loved my son dearly. But my new daughter might be a little easier on the nerves. At least until you start dating.”

“Uh-huh. If I was the suspicious type I might wonder why that gender spell was bookmarked, and why you wrote ‘awesome!’ next to it.”
Two weeks later, a mother realizes that daughters aren’t all they’re cracked up to be...

“Uhm… Patricia? I do love the dress you’ve chosen to laze around the house in, but don’t you think it’s about time you did something with your life? When I was your age, I was working part-time in my mother’s flower shop while going to beauty school at night. With the knowledge you’ve picked up from me, you could easily help out down at the salon. I have an opening for a shampoo girl.”

“Oh, puleeze. I didn’t turn myself into a girl so I could spend my free time washing hair for a bunch of old ladies too lazy to do it for themselves.”

“I know, but we all have to start somewhere. If you work hard it won’t take long to work your way up to beautician. If the skills aren’t there yet, they soon will be.”

“Work is a four-letter word, Mother. Do I look like the kind of girl who would even dream of working for a living? Isn’t that what husbands are for?”

“Bite your tongue, young lady. I didn’t raise you to be the kind of girl—”

“You didn’t raise me to be a girl at all. It was your magic that turned the trick, and we both know how that happened.” <smiles> “Thanks to that other spell you cast, Mother, I’m just like you. A chip off the old block, like you said. In fact, this is exactly the way you would’ve turned out if you’d grown up as pretty as I am.”

“That’s enough! The way you look is a gift; the fact that it came from your father’s side of the family is neither here nor there. I would think you’d be more grateful.”

“I know. I look just like Nana Palome in those pics from when she came over from the old country. I got the best of both worlds: her looks, and all those gnarly powers from your family. Pretty soon I’ll be a witch just like you. Then I’ll find some man I like and cast a love spell on him, and if necessary a spell to make him hung like a Clydesdale. I know that exists because I saw it back when I was still Peter. So I’m pretty much set for life. I don’t have to lift a finger. Why would I want to work?”

“I—I can’t believe what I’m hearing! That my own daughter could be so vain? So self-absorbed?” <moans theatrically> “Where—where did I go wrong?”

“Come now, Mother. I’m one of the pretty girls now. You could at least try to be happy for me.”<sniffs flowers> “It’s all about being pretty. You taught me that.”