Pandora's Box

The humans had accepted the gift of fire from Prometheus. He was a god with a good heart. He was not as powerful as Zeus. Zeus was furious to see that man was using fire for warmth and cooking. Zeus did not feel that man deserved the gift of fire, so he formulated a plan to punish them and Prometheus. Prometheus was chained to a rock for many years. Zeus decided to use Epimetheus, Prometheus's brother to punish mankind.

Zeus commanded Hephaestus to create a beautiful daughter for him. Hephaestus molded this woman out of clay, making her look like his beautiful wife, the goddess Aphrodite. Each of the gods and goddesses gave Pandora a gift. Athena breathed life into her. Aphrodite dressed her in fine clothing. Other gods gave her the gifts of kindness, peace, generosity, and health. Zeus named her Pandora and gave her the gift of curiosity.

Zeus was ready to put his plan into action. Zeus knew Epimetheus was lonely, so he sent Pandora to him as a gift.

Hermes guided Pandora down from Mount Olympus and presented her to Epimetheus. Hermes told him that Pandora was a gift from Zeus for all of his hard work.

Epimetheus became spellbound by Pandora's beauty. He knew he must spend the rest of his life with Pandora. The two became husband and wife.

As a wedding present, Zeus gave the couple a sparkling, golden box covered with precious stones and jewels. Immediately Pandora was intrigued by the box. However, Zeus instructed Pandora to never open the box.

Epimetheus brought Pandora to live in his house. He placed the box in the corner and forgot about it. The two lived happily. The only problem was that Pandora could not forget about the forbidden box.
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Every night Pandora laid awake thinking about what could be inside the box. The longer the box sat in the corner, the more curious Pandora grew. She tried to stay away from the box, but she found herself making excuses to visit the corner of the house. She tried to cover the box with a cloth, but that did not help. She tied the box shut and locked it in a chest in the attic, but she could not get the box out of her mind.

One day, Epimetheus was not home. Pandora found herself thinking about the box. "The suspense is getting the best of me," thought Pandora, "What's the harm in taking one peek? I'll just open it for a minute and close it. No one will ever know I opened it."

Pandora slowly crept into the attic, unlocked the chest, took a deep breath, and opened the box. The box exploded with horrible and evil things. Envy, greed, hatred, sickness, and disease flew out of the box. Zeus had known that curiosity would lead to the unleashing of these evils and from that moment on, they plagued mankind.

"What have I done?" Pandora cried. She quickly closed the lid of the box. As she did, she trapped one evil, despair—the total loss of hope.

Because despair was trapped inside the box, hope survived. Humans have been able to hold on to hope in order to survive the troubles Pandora released from the box. Hope keeps humans optimistic and always looking on the bright side. Hope allows people to believe that no matter how bad today is, tomorrow will be better.