Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: The Gift of Pandora by Charity Kim, Marian Pinera", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/298. Entry version as of October 30, 2026.

Charity Kim , Marian Pinera

The Gift of Pandora

United States of America (2013)

TAGS: Aphrodite Ares Athena Pandora Prometheus Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Gift of Pandora
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States of America
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2013
First Edition Details	Kim Charity and Pinera Marian, *The Gift of Pandora* (Magical Tales of True Love, 4). BlueRibbonBooks.com, 2013, 17 pp.
Genre	Alternative histories (Fiction), Mythological fiction, Short stories
Target Audience	Children (Young children 5 years and up)
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Additional information

Summary

Five year old Pandora is being cautioned not to open a mysterious box. Her mother tells her about the mythological Pandora in order to explain the dangers of curiosity. At the end of the book there is an introduction to the series: “This volume’s collection of bedtime stories features old and beloved characters of Greek mythology together with new princes and princesses to spark your child’s imagination.” (pp. 419–420).

Analysis

The story begins when a 5 years old girl insists on opening a mysterious box, which she is sure is a gift for her birthday. Her mother tries to warn her, “Your father explicitly said that it is not to be opened if he is not here. Bad things may happen if we don’t heed his words.” (pp. 25–27). In another attempt, the mother explains, not all gifts are wonderful, and not all are meant to be opened. “Take the gift of Pandora for instance.” (pp. 31–33). She then starts telling her the story of Pandora. So we are reading a story within a story.

The mythological story begins with the creation of woman which is a nice change from many stories which begin without sharing the origin of Pandora. But then the story deviates from the original myth. Pandora is sent to earth where she is worshiped by all men except prince Prometheus. Ares advises Zeus to create more women (so that men would stop fighting over Pandora) and Pandora is hurt and jealous. Pandora is described as selfish and vain. “A beautiful girl she may be, but her heart was just the opposite,” (pp. 148–149). In the original myth Pandora was always portrayed as curious, not evil in any way.

Pandora then meets prince Prometheus and his girlfriend, princess Maria of whom she is of course jealous. In one of the rooms of Prometheus’ castle Pandora discovers a huge box. Despite warnings from Prometheus not to open the box, she opens it and the evils locked inside, such as, hunger, thirst, death etc., escape. The final evil was Vanity who snatched Pandora away and she was not seen again (in what seemed like a proper punishment for her behaviour).

The last creature in the box is the butterfly, hope. Yet hope does not reach Pandora at all.

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	In this modern variation of the myth, Pandora is deprived of hope. Her irresponsible behaviour has permanent consequences. Pandora's punishment is revealed: "Far, far away, in a dark corner of the world, Pandora sat alone and watched on a magic mirror as the prince and the princess fell even more in love and married. Her heart filled with even more envy and so it would be for the rest of her life." (pp. 409–412). In this reception of the story, the myth transformed according to contemporary concerns and compared to heroes from other cultures or periods in history. The moral of the original story is that Pandora paid for her curiosity and understood her mistake. The moral in this tale is clearly that beauty is not everything. It is a new take of the myth of Pandora. Pandora herself does not learn anything and does not change her behaviour, she is the villain of a bedtime story while the heroine is kind-hearted princess Maria.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aphrodite Ares Athena Pandora Prometheus Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Parents (and children)
Addenda	The review refers to the Kindle edition.

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