

# PANDORA'S BOX



## CHARACTERS

CHORUS 1	DISEASE
CHORUS 2	CRUELTY
ZEUS (ZOOOS)	PAIN
PROMETHEUS	OLD AGE
(pro-MEE-thee-us)	DISAPPOINTMENT
EPIMETHEUS	HATE
(ep-uh-MEE-thee-us)	JEALOUSY
APHRODITE	WAR
(af-reh-DY-tee)	DEATH
HERMES (HER-meez)	HOPE
APOLLO (uh-PAH-loh)	
PANDORA (pan-DOR-ah)	

- CHORUS 1:** Zeus, king of the gods, was angry with Prometheus for giving the gift of fire to the mortals.
- CHORUS 2:** He was also angry with the mortals for taking the gift. He would punish Prometheus and the mortals.
- CHORUS 1:** Epimetheus, Prometheus's brother, would help him punish the mortals, although Epimetheus didn't know it.
- CHORUS 2:** One day, Zeus called the brothers to him.

**ZEUS:** Come here, my friends.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Here we are.

**PROMETHEUS:** What is it, Zeus?

**ZEUS:** Well, first of all, Prometheus. You gave the gift of fire to the mortals. I am very angry about that. Such a wonderful thing should be only for gods like us, not lowly mortals.

**PROMETHEUS:** Sorry, Zeus.

**ZEUS:** You will be severely punished for what you've done. I'll deal with you later. Now Epimetheus.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Y-y-yes, Zeus.

**ZEUS:** To you, I have a gift. A wife! I made her myself with some help from the other gods.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Great! What is she like?

**ZEUS:** See for yourself. Gods, bring in Pandora!

**APHRODITE:** Here she is. I have given her beauty so she can please your eyes.

**HERMES:** I have given her a clever tongue so she can amuse you.

**APOLLO:** I have given her the gift of music so she can entertain you.

**CHORUS 1:** Zeus had given her the gift of curiosity.

**CHORUS 2:** But he didn't mention that to Epimetheus.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Wow, she's wonderful. Thank you, Zeus.

**PROMETHEUS:** No fair!

**ZEUS:** *(To Prometheus)* Never mind, you. *(To Epimetheus and Pandora)* Go and live happily together. Oh, yes, take this box as a wedding gift. *(Zeus hands Epimetheus a box.)* But you must never, ever open it.

**EPIMETHEUS:** We won't. It's beautiful. Thank you again.

**CHORUS 1:** So Zeus punished Prometheus by chaining him to a rock, while Epimetheus went home with his new wife.

**CHORUS 2:** Little did they know, Zeus's plan to punish the mortals was about to unfold.

**PANDORA:** Okay, Epi, we're in our own home now. Let's see what's in the box.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Oh, no, Pandora. I promised Zeus we wouldn't.

**PANDORA:** You are a married god now. You don't have to listen to Zeus.

**EPIMETHEUS:** Yes, I do, and you should too. He is a very powerful god—the most powerful. If he says don't open the box, you don't open the box, and that's that. (*He leaves.*)

**PANDORA:** Hmm . . . *I* didn't promise anything. But maybe Epimetheus is right. Still, what could happen? It seems like a harmless box. There are probably some fine dishes or jewels in it. I must find out! No, I shouldn't. But it's *my* wedding present too. I will!

**CHORUS 1:** Don't do it, Pandora!

**CHORUS 2:** Listen to your husband and to almighty Zeus.

**PANDORA:** I don't have to listen to anyone! Go away!

**CHORUS 1 & 2:** You'll be sorry!

**CHORUS 1:** Pandora took a little gold key and opened the box a crack.

**PANDORA:** (*Opening the box*) Just a little peek . . .

**CHORUS 2:** Suddenly, out popped the world's Miseries, ready to wreak havoc on the unsuspecting mortals!

**DISEASE:** Ah-hah! You foolish girl! You have let us out!

**PANDORA:** Who are you?

**DISEASE:** I am Disease. Now man shall get sick.

**CRUELTY:** I am Cruelty. Now men shall be mean to one another.

**PAIN:** I am Pain. Man shall now hurt.

**OLD AGE:** I am Old Age. Pretty self-explanatory.

**DISAPPOINTMENT:** I'm Disappointment. Now man shall feel let down.

**HATE:** I'm Hate. Man will now dislike others.

**JEALOUSY:** I am Jealousy. Man will now yearn for the things others have.

**WAR:** I'm War. Man will not live in peace.

**DEATH:** And I am Death. Man will not live forever!

**PANDORA:** What have I done?

**HOPE:** (*Sweetly, peeking out from the box*) You have played out Zeus's punishment to man for accepting Prometheus's gift of fire. These Miseries will go out among man and cause them much suffering.

**PANDORA:** Well, who are *you*? You don't seem very miserable.

**HOPE:** I am Hope. Keep me in the box. The Miseries will go out among the mortals. But I will remain so that humans will always have me in spite of all the evils that have gone out among them. I will help them bear the pain, but only if I remain safe inside this box.

**PANDORA:** Oh. Okay. Bye-bye now.

**CHORUS 1:** And so Pandora shut the box, leaving Hope inside to help man bear the new Miseries.

**CHORUS 2:** And to this day, when someone "opens Pandora's box," he or she causes trouble.

**PANDORA:** Some wedding gift! I really wanted a toaster!

**THE END**



## Glossary

**mortals:** human beings

**lowly:** having a low rank or position

**severely:** very harshly

**curiosity:** eagerness to find things out

**unfold:** to become known

**harmless:** not able to cause injury or damage

**almighty:** possessing total power

**miseries:** things that cause great discomfort or unhappiness

**wreak:** to cause

**havoc:** great damage and chaos

**unsuspecting:** the state of not knowing something will happen

**self-explanatory:** not needing any further explanation

**in spite of:** without being hindered by, or in defiance of

