Amanda Potter, "Entry on: Charmed (Series, S07E18): Little Box of Horrors by Constance M. Burge, Brad Kern, Cameron Litvack, Jon Paré, Aaron Spelling, E. Duke Vincent", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/150. Entry version as of November 06, 2026.

Constance M. Burge , Brad Kern , Cameron Litvack , Jon Paré , Aaron Spelling , E. Duke Vincent

Charmed (Series, S07E18): Little Box of Horrors

United States (2005)

TAGS: Erinyes Furies Hope Pandora





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

General information	
Title of the work	Charmed (Series, S07E18): Little Box of Horrors
Studio/Production Company	Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Company, Viacom Productions, WB Television Network
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2005
First Edition Details	*Charmed* (Series, S07E18): *Little Box of Horrors*, directed by Jon Paré, written by Cameron Litvack, produced by Constance M. Burge, Aaron Spelling and others, Paramount Pictures, Spelling Production Company, Viacom Productions, WB Television Network, 2005.
Running time	Each episode has a running time of 42 minutes (or 1 hour including adverts)
Date of the First DVD or VHS	6 February 2007 (DVD: Season Seven featuring)
Official Website	The official WB website is no longer active. The Charmed wiki maintained by fans includes useful information: charmed.wikia.com (accessed: August 17, 2018).
Genre	Alternative histories (Fiction), Fantasy fiction, Television series
Target Audience	Young adults (The DVD was given a 12 rating)

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Creators



Constance M. Burge , b. 1957
(Producer, Scriptwriter)

Constance M. Burge is an American television writer and producer. She is the creator of *Charmed* and *Savannah*, and has written episodes for a number of US series including *Ally McBeal*, *Judging Amy*, *Boston Public* and *Royal Pains.* Burge left her position as executive producer on *Charmed* after season one, although she remained as executive consultant up to season four. It was only after Burge left *Charmed* that Greek mythology-based stories started to appear.

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University,
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Brad Kern (Producer, Scriptwriter)

Brad Kern is an American television writer and producer. He studied film and television at California State University, and began his television career as a writer on detective series *Remington Steele*. He has produced a number of series including *Remington Steele,* becoming supervising producer for the show. As well as working as executive producer for all eight seasons of *Charmed,* Kern previously worked on US fantasy series *Beauty and the Beast* and *Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman.* He has since worked on *NCIS: New Orleans.*

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University,

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Cameron Litvack , b. 1980
(Scriptwriter)

Cameron Litvack is an American television writer and producer. He has worked on a number of series including *Ugly Betty, Charmed, V* and *Grimm*. Although he has worked on science fiction and fantasy series he has not specifically written episodes based on Greek mythology, other than the *Charmed* episode *Little Box of Horrors*.

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk



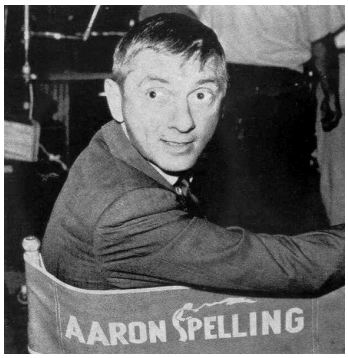
Jon Paré (Director, Producer)

Jon Paré is an American television director and producer. He has worked on a number of series including *Charmed, Beverley Hills 90210, Sons of Anarchy, 24* and *Southland*. He has not specifically directed episodes based on Greek mythology, other than the *Charmed* episode *Little Box of Horrors*.

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk

Aaron Spelling , 1923 - 2006
(Producer)

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Retrieved from Wikipedia Commons, public domain (accessed: December 8, 2021).

Aaron Spelling was an American film and television producer. After completing a degree in journalism at the Southern Methodist University he started his career as an actor and scriptwriter in the 1950s. In the 1960s he turned to producing and produced many popular television series including *Charlie's Angels, The Love Boat, Hart to Hart, Dynasty, Beverley Hills 90210* and *Charmed*. He won a number of television awards including Emmys and BAFTAs. Spelling is well-known for his prime-time drama series rather than fantasy shows, and *Charmed* was conceived as a show about women who happened to be witches (see DVD special features).

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk

E. Duke Vincent , b. 1932
(Producer)

E. Duke Vincent is an American television producer, who worked on a number of series with Aaron Spelling, as an executive on a number of Spelling production companies. He was producer for a number of Spelling series including *Charlie's Angels, Dynasty, Charmed, Melrose Place, Beverley Hills 90210* and *Savannah*. He has also written novels set in the world of the entertainment industry.

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk

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Additional information

Casting

[for "Little Shop of Horrors"]

Alyssa Milano – Phoebe Halliwell,

Rose McGowan – Paige Matthews,

Holly Marie Combs – Piper Halliwell,

Bryan Krause – Leo Wyatt,

Brooke Nevin – Hope,

Michelle Hurd – Katya,

Shani Pride – Darcy.

Summary

The episode begins with two female characters fighting over a box. We later learn that these are Katya, a demon, who wants to retrieve the box as a weapon, and thus ingratiate herself with a more important demon, Zankou, and Nina, the guardian of the box. The box mysteriously disappears, and Katya, who can shape shift, poses as Nina, and approaches the Charmed Ones Piper and Phoebe to help her find Pandora's Box. The Box has turned up on the bed of college student Hope, who opens it slightly, and out comes a dark mist which is "the first wave of sorrows", before Hope quickly closes it again, not knowing what it is. Piper, accompanied by Katya, still posing as Nina, approach Hope. Piper asks Hope if she has received an object and whether she has been taking any mythology classes; Katya explains that the box is "a gift the gods gave to Prometheus, one that contained all the evils of the world, until Pandora unleashed it upon an unsuspecting people. I hope to do the same", and Katya reveals herself to be a demon and takes the box.

Phoebe finds out more about the box from an Elder, Sandra. It is "part of the grand design" and its sole purpose is "to tempt". Phoebe joins Piper with Hope, and they explain to her she has a duty as a guardian, but unsurprisingly Hope is "freaked", and refuses to go with the sisters. Meanwhile Katya finds that she, as a demon, is unable to open

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the box; she needs Hope for this, as most of the evils are still within the box. Katya therefore kidnaps Hope's friend Darcy, keeping her in an underground lair, and Hope must open the box to save her. Katya tries to persuade Hope that she should open the box not only to save her friend but so that she can avoid being a guardian. Hope, however, will not open it, and so Darcy is threatened. Hope finally opens the box, and Katya now wants to kill her to prevent her from putting the evils back into the box. It transpires that when the box was originally opened by Pandora she came to believe in herself and understand her powers, and was able to put the evils back, making Pandora/Hope a heroine who can rectify her own mistake, and the first guardian of the box.

Piper and Phoebe arrive and save Hope. Katya shapeshifts into Darcy, whom she has knocked out, and accompanies the sisters and Hope back to the witches' house. Katya as Darcy tries to persuade Hope to leave with her. However Paige, who can also shape shift, turns into Hope, and when Katya returns to her lair, Paige reveals herself, uses a potion to vanquish Katya and brings Darcy and the box back. With encouragement from Darcy and from the witches, who tell her that being a guardian is her destiny, as being witches was theirs, Hope is able to reopen the box and puts the evils back inside. As Darcy says to her friend "you're forgetting something about Pandora's Box. According to myth, when all the sorrows were released there was one thing left at the bottom of the box… hope."

Analysis

Charmed is a long-running fantasy television series featuring a family of three young witches, known as the Charmed Ones, who fight demons from their home in San Francisco, while trying to maintain some semblance of normal lives, with careers and boyfriends/husbands. The series borrows from many genres and traditions, and includes characters and/or storylines from Greek mythology in a small number of episodes, primarily "The Furies" (4.3), "Oh My Goddess" (5.22 and 5.23), "Muse to My Ears" (4.9) and "Siren Song" (5.4).

"Little Box of Horrors" (7.18) is the last of the episodes to include a storyline based on Greek mythology, i.e. the story of Pandora, although as would be expected the episode uses the more well-known Pandora's Box rather than the *pithos* from Hesiod's *Works and Days*.

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Rather than being a reworking of the story of Pandora from Hesiod, "Little Box of Horrors" is a reworking of the popular version of the story of Pandora's Box from children's literature, for example in Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Paradise of Children" (1851) from *A Wonder Book for Girls and Boys* (full text available here, accessed: January 30, 2018), where Pandora opens a box out of curiosity.

"Little Box of Horrors" is rather confusing, with much shape shifting between characters and "orbing" (teleporting) from scene to scene, and with a sub plot about the youngest of the three witches, Paige, learning about how helping other people through difficult situations is important to her (she is stuck in a lift with a number of other people including an asthmatic child without her ventilator). However, the episode is interesting as it turns Hesiod's misogynist story of Pandora, the first evil woman, to a story of sisterhood, where the Pandora character (Hope) can learn from her friends and become a positive, active heroine. This television episode therefore presents us with an updated version of the story of Pandora with a positive message for the young female viewers, with themes of female sisterhood and friendship.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Erinyes Furies Hope Pandora
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Family Friendship Magic Magic powers Relationships Siblings Witch
Further Reading	Beeler, Karin, "Old Myths, New Powers: Images of Second-Wave and Third-Wave Feminism in *Charmed*" in Karin Beeler and Stan Beeler, eds., *Investigating Charmed: The Magic Power of TV*, London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007, 100–111.

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Feasey, Rebecca, "Watching *Charmed*: Why Teen Television Appeals to Women", *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 34.1 (2006): 2–9.

Meyer, Michaela D. E., "'Something Wicca This Way Comes': Audience Interpretation of a Marginalised Religious Philosophy on *Charmed*" in Karin Beeler and Stan Beeler, eds., *Investigating Charmed: The Magic Power of TV*, London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007, 9–18.

Potter, Amanda, "Unpacking Pandora's Box: The Redemption of an Ancient Anti-heroine for a Twenty-First Century Audience in US TV Series *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Charmed*" in Amina Ayal and Paul Hardwick, eds., *Classical and Contemporary Mythic Identities: Construction of the Literary Imagination*, Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 2010, 97–122.

Addenda

Release Date:

Season 1, 22 episodes, first broadcast 7 October 1998 – 26 May 1999

Season 2, 22 episodes, first broadcast 30 September 1999 – 18 May 2000

Season 3, 22 episodes, first broadcast 5 October 2000 – 17 May 2001

Season 4, 22 episodes, first broadcast 4 October 2001 – 16 May 2002

Season 5, 22 episodes, first broadcast 22 September 2002 – 11 May 2003

Season 6, 22 episodes, first broadcast 28 September 2003 – 16 May 2004

Season 7, 22 episodes, first broadcast 12 September 2004 – 22 may 2005

Season 8, 22 episodes, first broadcast 25 September 2005 – 21 May 2006

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