Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Pandora and The Mystery Box by Sally Grindley, Nilesh Mistry", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/819. Entry version as of November 02, 2026.

Sally Grindley , Nilesh Mistry

Pandora and The Mystery Box

United Kingdom (1999)

TAGS: Athena Epimetheus Pandora Prometheus Zeus





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

General information	
Title of the work	Pandora and The Mystery Box
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1999
First Edition Details	Sally Grindley, *Pandora and The Mystery Box*, Magical Myths. Hove: Macdonald Young Books, 1999, 32 pp.
ISBN	9780750026987
Genre	Adaptations, Illustrated works, Myths
Target Audience	Children (Ages 6–11)
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Creators



Photo courtesy of the Author.

Sally Grindley (Author)

Grindley has been a children's book author for more than 30 years. She has written more than 150 books. She went to Chatham Grammar School for Girls as a child and later went to Sussex University to study French Literature. After graduation, she worked for a nationwide children's book club for 17 years. She has been a full-time author from 1995. Her second novel, *SPILLED WATER*, was the Gold Medal Winner of the Smarties Book Prize.

Source:

Official website (accessed: August 6, 2019)

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com



Photo courtesy of the Illustrator.

Nilesh Mistry (Illustrator)

Nilesh is an artist who was born in Mumbai and educated in London. His art is diverse, ranging from books to fashion illustrations to portraiture, product design and decorative sculptures.

Source:

Official website (accessed: August 6, 2019)

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Additional information

Summary

This is a retelling of the myth of Pandora's box. The story briefly narrates the creation of the primordial world, then the emergence of the Titans and their war with the gods. Men are then created by Prometheus and Athena. Next, after Epimetheus gives all of Mother Earth's gifts to the animals, Prometheus sets out to steal the fire for mankind. Zeus is angry with mankind for their use of fire and decides to punish them. Zeus creates the female Pandora and the other gods grant her gifts such as beauty and charm. She is then sent to Prometheus' house and while Prometheus cautions his brother, Epimetheus, about Pandora, yet unsuccessfully. When she arrives, they fall in love and she remains with Epimetheus. The god's messenger brings the couple a box for safekeeping and asks them not to open it. Yet Pandora is curious and opens the box. She unleashes tiny mosquito-like creatures, which sting all the humans, making them feel pain and sadness. Epimetheus and Pandora are also covered in bites which graphically displays the result of the evil creatures' bites. In the end, Epimetheus discovers another creature trapped inside the box (in the shape of a butterfly), and when he releases the creature, it unleashes Hope to mankind. The story is accompanied by big colourful illustrations which take up most of each page.

Analysis

The story of Pandora is a famous myth, which is often retold for children. In this retelling, however, we can discern a few deviations from the more common versions of the myth. While Pandora is created as part of Zeus' plan to punish mankind, there is no indication that the gods were responsible for her most well-known trait, curiosity. In fact, her curiosity is toned down in this version. She does not spend a long time contemplating the box, nor does it take her a long time to open it. As soon as the box is given to them and Epimetheus leaves, she manages to open it easily. There is no struggle (inner or external) within Pandora regarding the box and her curiosity is not emphasized at all.

Furthermore, another important element of change in this version of the myth is that Pandora is described as weeping after letting loose the evils, while it is Epimetheus who hears the sound of the trapped Hope from the box and releases it to the world, not Pandora. Therefore she is responsible for the miseries which befell humankind,

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	while Epimetheus is their saviour, the one who gave men Hope In the original ancient versions of the myth, by Hesiod for example, Pandora's curiosity is not emphasized, but her craftiness is mentioned as one of the "gifts" endowed on her by Hermes (on Zeus' command). However, she is solely responsible for opening the jar and releasing the evils and Hope associated with it. Only in one version, from Aesop, Fables 526, it does appear that Epimetheus might have been the one to open the jar. (taken from theoi.com, accessed: August 6, 2019). The author of this book therefore chose to involve Epimetheus in this story, perhaps as an atonement for his disregarding of his brother's warning and causing suffering in the first place.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Athena Epimetheus Pandora Prometheus Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Conflict Gender Punishment
Addenda	The analysis made on the edition: Sally Grindley, *Pandora and The Mystery Box* (Magical Myths). Hove: Wayland, 2000.

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