Pandora: the untold sagas

As I opened my eyes, a man gazed at me lovingly, as he stroked his tangled beard. ‘Pandora, the first human’ he proclaimed.

Gently, he popped me on my feet. I looked up to see six other people looking at me.

The man exclaimed ’Pandora, we are your creators.’ The one who breathed life into me, Hephaestus: God of fire and craft; his ultramarine eyes dart around the palace of Olympus looking for something to fix, his buff, strong hands twitching, eager to put its hand on a novel piece of technology.

Beauty and Love overcame the room. Aphrodite walked in, her long blonde hair covering her emerald, green eyes; she touched my heart. Suddenly I felt happiness, excitement and sadness, fear, anxiety. She gently brushed her hand through my hazelnut hair

‘Bonjour, je m’appelle Hermes, et tu?’ said a man with silky blonde hair with azure eyes that danced in the sunlight. Without taking another second to process the question I replied ‘Salut Hermes, je m’appelle Pandora et je suis amusant’ Cheekily, he grinned, nodding his head. Instantaneously, I called ‘Wie geht es dir.’ ‘I’m great thanks’ he shouted, before he whizzed into the sky.

A woman with jet-black, wise eyes touched my head lightly. Suddenly a shock passed through my brain; I crawled to the nearest painting and pointed at key details, explaining why it was effective. Athena (who is said to be cold-hearted) smiled warmly at me, asking questions on my opinion.

Finally, a tall man, who towered over the other gods and goddesses, held me in his soft hands. ‘Little Child – Pandora - I give you the gift of curiosity, the urge to explore and find, and the Pithos but do not open it otherwise the one who kills the cats of curiosity will be set free.’

As I grew, I become more impatient, I wanted to open the box; eventually Zeus had to lock the box in a steel box, made by Hephaestus.

The other gods tried to occupy me with other hobbies; Hermes taught all the languages that I could imagine: French, German, Spanish, even Mandarin. As I was blessed with a swift mind perfect for learning languages fluently.

Artemis made me study the art of archery and hunting and Apollo taught me lyre (a beautiful, harmonizing instrument) and we even tried to make new instruments as I was so interested in the subject.

When I was about 15 years old, Zeus called me into his grand throne room; ‘Pandora, it is time for to be set into the world and start the breed of humans, I will trust you with the Pithos but remember don’t open the box!’ proclaimed Zeus.

For the first time in my whole life, I saw Zeus shed a tear. All the gods, who raised me as a child, wish me farewell and to Earth I went.

Cornucopia of flowers and blossoms; evergreen, towering tree, I picked up a lavender, honeysuckle and smelt it; fragrant, aroma snaked up my nose, whetting my appetite.

‘I love honeysuckle, it smells absolutely divine, my favourite creation,’ mumbled an unfamiliar voice.

‘Creation?’ I questioned.

‘Yes, of course. I am Epimetheus. Zeus sent me to design Earth to be what is it’ he replied.

‘You created all of this - the milky-white candy floss in sky, buzzing bugs, even the gorgeous, pristine pond with little eyes dotted around? Did you do this all by yourself? You must have been so exhausted!’ I gasped.

He giggled, ‘I did make all of that but,’ he paused, his face became solemn ‘I didn’t do it alone; my brother, Prometheus, h-h-he created the first humans and gave them f-f-fire.’

‘What is fire?’ I asked curiously

‘A blazing force that can crush anything in its way. Zeus punished him, I-I-I haven’t saw him since, h-he was my only friend, my only family,’ he murmured. A cold, wet tear rolled down his face. I wiped it with my hand.

Epimetheus gave me a slight smile, but I could feel his misery. He coughed. ‘Anyway, why do you have that box?’ yelled Epimetheus. For the first time for a while, the Pithos meandered into my mind, ‘Oh Zeus, gave this to be but oddly I not allowed to open it,’ I declared.

He nodded. I suspected that mentioning Zeus wasn’t the right move. Gently, Epimetheus took my hand and led me to an enchanting cottage decorated with a plethora of flowers: rosy-pink lilies, banana-yellow tulips, violet orchards; sage green vines wrapped around the snow-white pillars.

‘This is my home!’ announced Epimetheus, ’I made it with my own two hands.’

‘WOW’ I yelled.

Epimetheus’ cottage was vastly different than Olympus, which was a humongous mansion that loomed over the heavens with immense pride, while the cottage was a small place, that only held the necessary items that we needed. Epimetheus made a separate room for me with comfortable bed and desk, sitting proudly on the surface - the Pithos.

Over the next week, Epimetheus introduced me to life on earth; he taught me how to wash my clothes, cook, collect frog spawn (my personal favourite), and more things.

Although I was entertained with everything that Epimetheus showed me, at the back of mind, the fate of the Pithos lingered, never leaving. One day, I told Epimetheus that I was going to the nearby meadow, nothing out of the ordinary. Just as I was about to go, someone called my name.

‘Pandora, my child.’ A compelling voice purred.

Following the whisper, I became more curious, and hooked like fish on line. Until I met my desk; on it was the Pithos but it looked different, the colours more vibrant, as if roaring with joy. The Pithos glowed.

A bony thin finger brushed my hair just like Aphrodite did when I was younger, but I felt different; instead of love and tenderness, I felt hatred and conflict. I turned around to see a woman with high cheek bones, her eyes were pure white, slightly covered by her stygian, thread-like hair; an aura of death waved over.

Bang, boom, smash – the door was shut, and someone was trying to open it restlessly.

‘Haa,’ the woman cackled. ‘Oh, I forget to introduce myself: Eris, goddess of strife and argument.’

Out of nowhere, a bright orange cat meandered into the corner of my eye. Eris turned her head to face it and it vanished into thin air. My eyes widened… The killer of cats of curiosity … It dawned on me, but she is supposed to be set free if the Pithos is opened.

‘I’m not free,’ Eris mumbled, as her eyes gleamed with absurdity ‘My child that is why I’m here!’

She raised her hands to reveal handcuffs, abruptly chains started to rise over her body.

‘Free me, free me or those who love you will die,’ she chanted.

My voice quavered. ‘Fine, p-p-please don’t hurt anyone, don’t hurt Athena or H-h-Hephaestus or Epimetheus,’ I shouted.

Slowly, I lifted the lid. My hands shaking. My heart thumping. I could feel all the gods and goddesses shaking their heads at me, wondering how I became such a disappointment…

While Eris grinned, I wept. The lid was open. Eris was set free, hoards of evil and despair crashed through the boundary of earth spilling into the world. I couldn’t believe it, Eris was free, and all her hatred, strife and disharmony was gone, spread into all human’s heart.

On my knees, I cried to the heavens. Zeus appeared. The Pithos let out a roar but this time it was of warmth and satisfaction. A fiery woman sprung out. ‘This is Hestia, goddess of warmth and the hearth; along with Eris she was trapped in the Pithos, and with Eris she is freed sending warmth into the hearts of humans.’

‘But what about Eris? What should we do?’ I asked

‘We do nothing. Humans have a choice to pick warmth and happiness and satisfaction or strife and anger. You know, did I tell you the quote “curiosity kills the cat, but satisfaction brings it”?’

As if on cue, the vibrant orange cat leapt into my arms. I smiled although I couldn't undo what happened, it was still nice to know that something good came out of it.