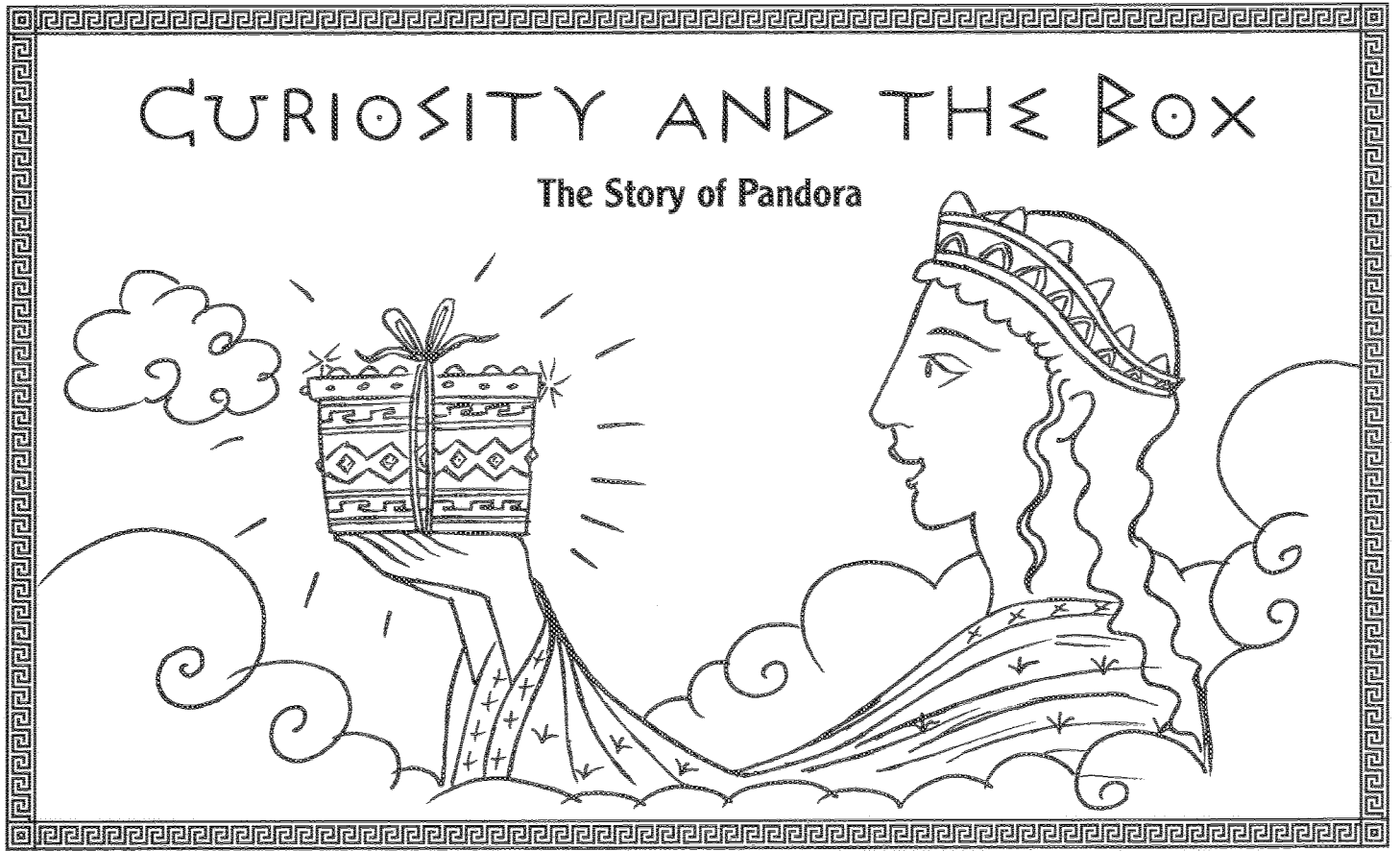


# CURIOSITY AND THE BOX

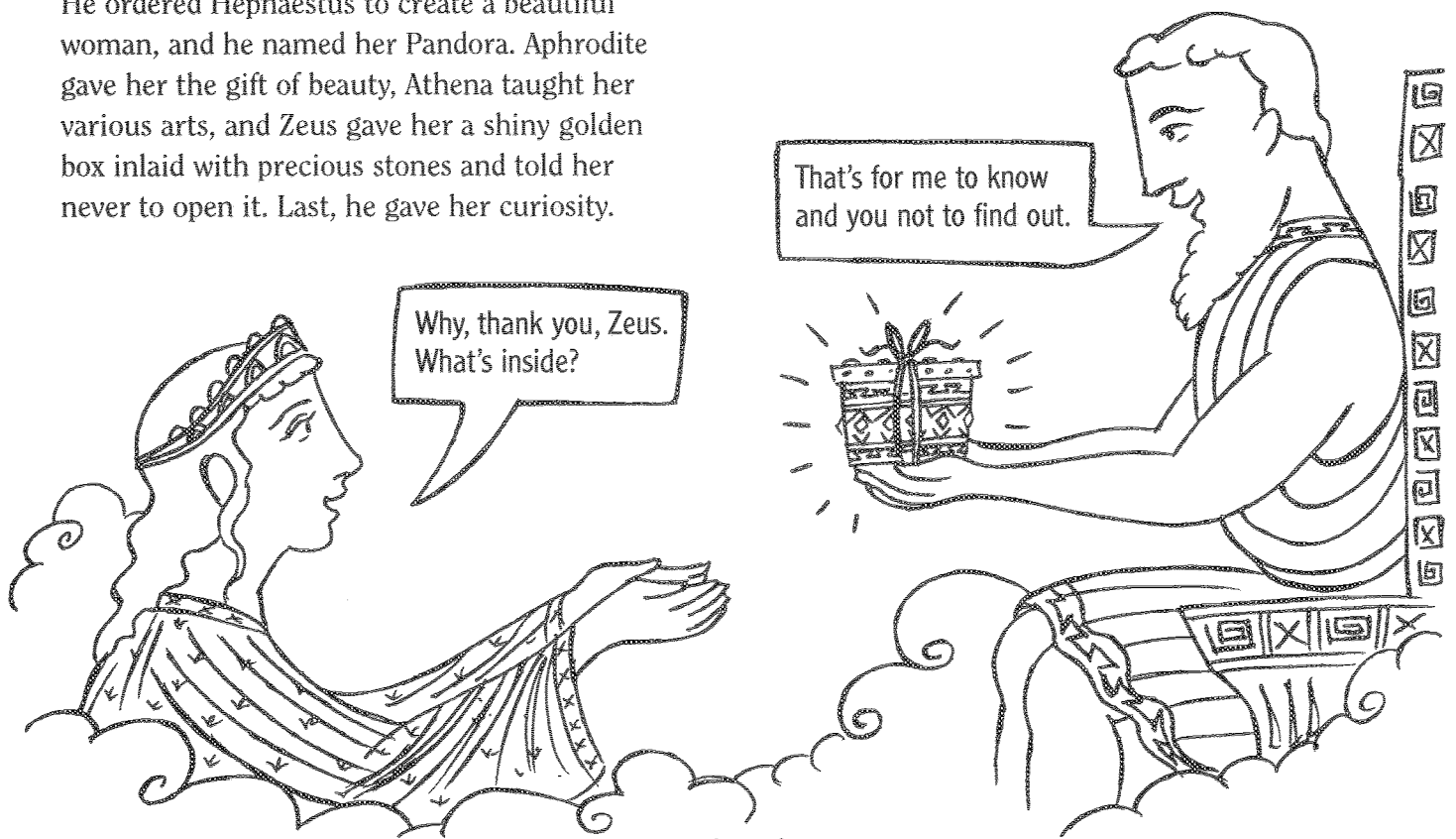
## The Story of Pandora

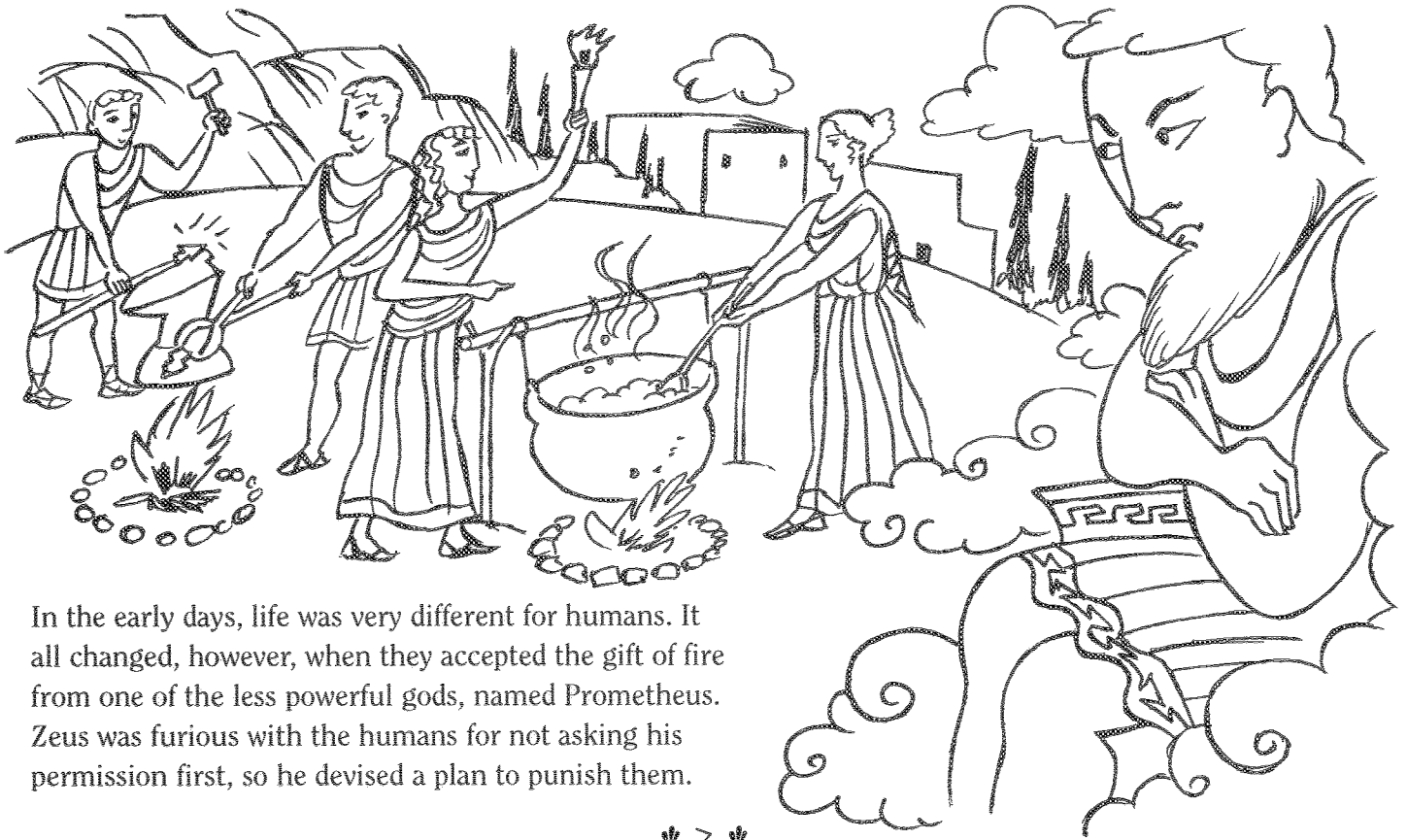


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He ordered Hephaestus to create a beautiful woman, and he named her Pandora. Aphrodite gave her the gift of beauty, Athena taught her various arts, and Zeus gave her a shiny golden box inlaid with precious stones and told her never to open it. Last, he gave her curiosity.

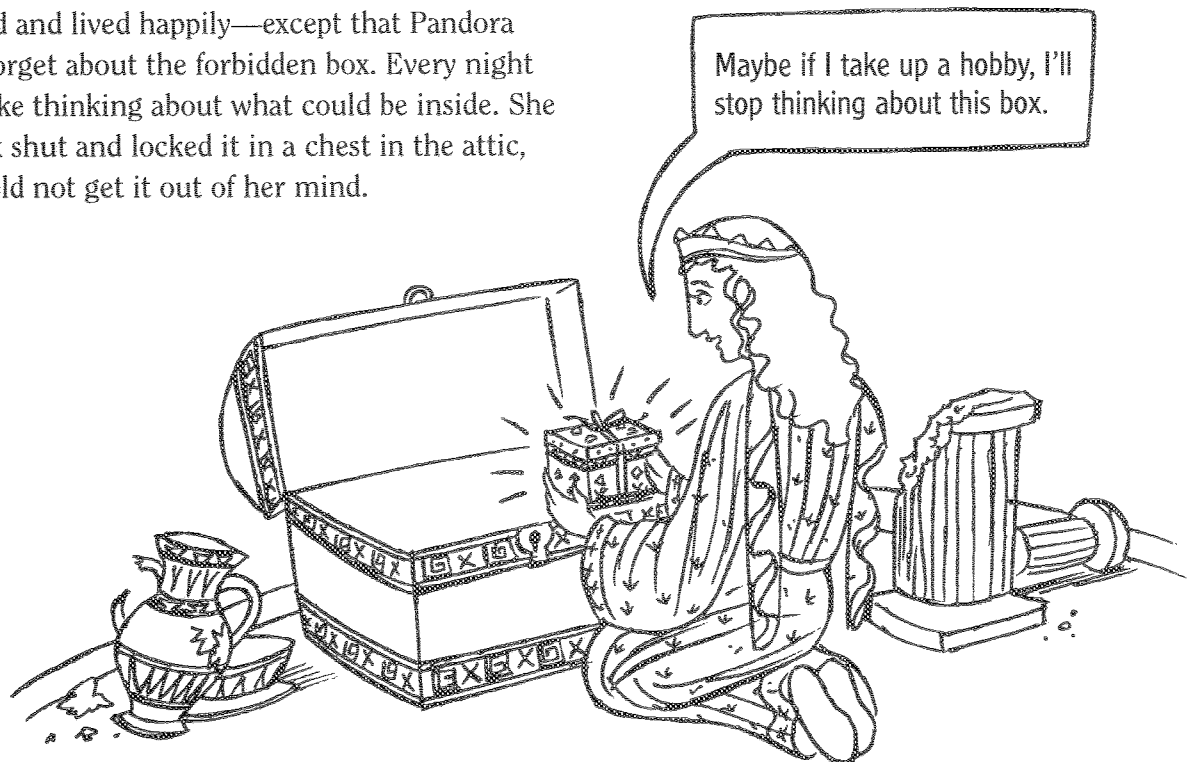




In the early days, life was very different for humans. It all changed, however, when they accepted the gift of fire from one of the less powerful gods, named Prometheus. Zeus was furious with the humans for not asking his permission first, so he devised a plan to punish them.



Hermes guided Pandora down from Mount Olympus and presented her to Prometheus's brother, Epimetheus. The two married and lived happily—except that Pandora could not forget about the forbidden box. Every night she lay awake thinking about what could be inside. She tied the box shut and locked it in a chest in the attic, but she could not get it out of her mind.



Pandora tried everything—stomping grapes, designing togas, playing the lyre—but nothing could get her mind off of that mysterious present. One night, Pandora lay awake, once again thinking about the little golden box.

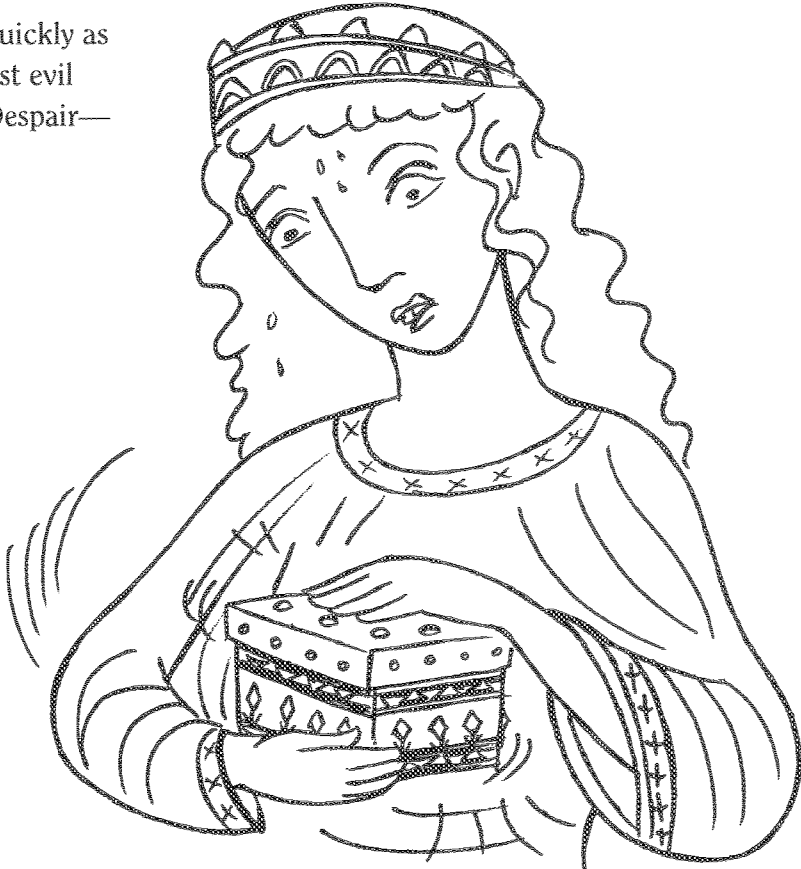
The suspense is killing me! What's the harm in taking one little peek? Then I'll just close up the box and no one will ever know I opened it.



She crept into the attic, unlocked the chest, untied the string, and—holding her breath—opened the box.

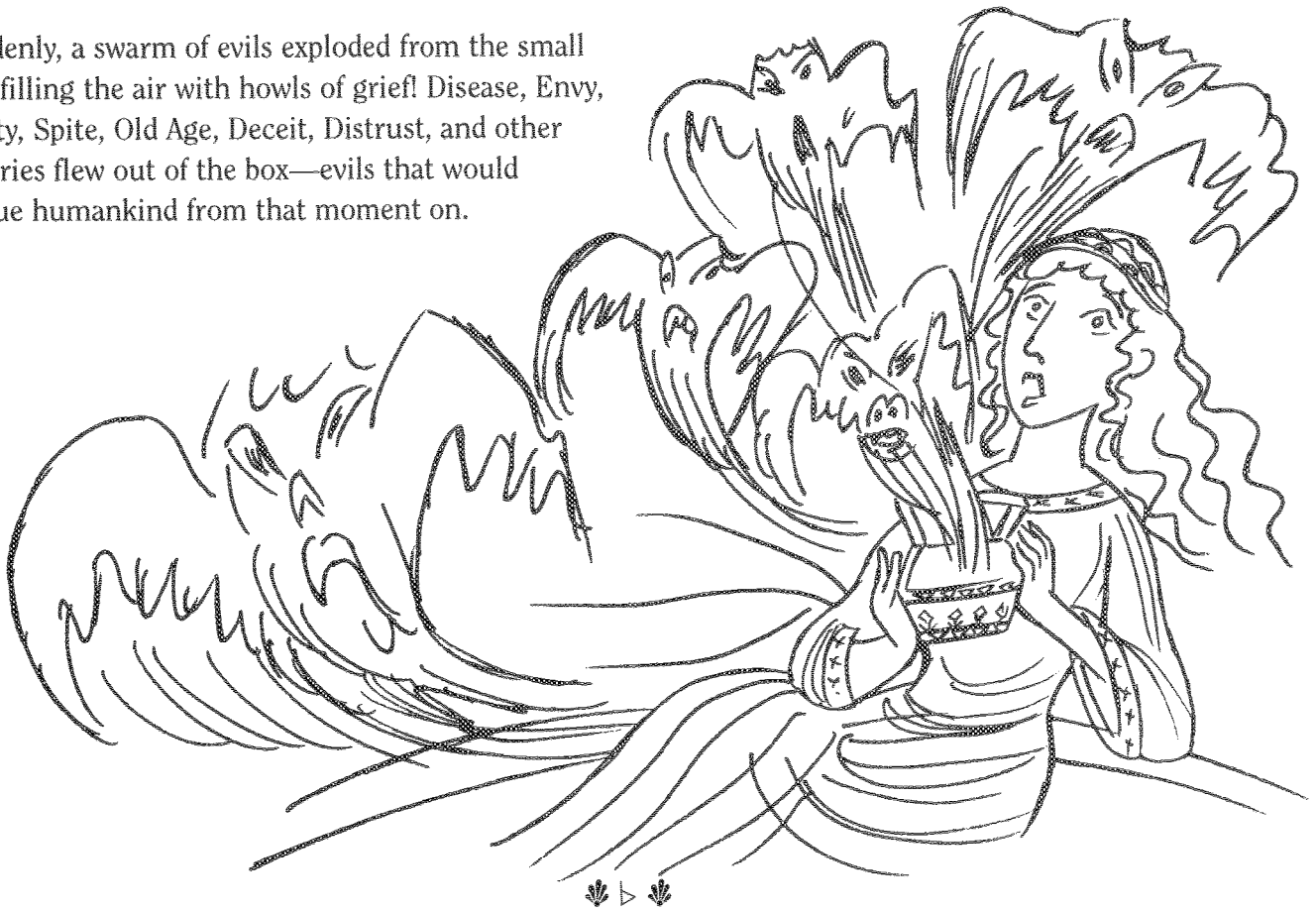
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Pandora shut the box as quickly as she could, trapping one last evil inside. This last evil was Despair—the total loss of hope.



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Suddenly, a swarm of evils exploded from the small box, filling the air with howls of grief! Disease, Envy, Vanity, Spite, Old Age, Deceit, Distrust, and other miseries flew out of the box—evils that would plague humankind from that moment on.



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If Despair had escaped from the box, people would never expect anything good to happen. All of their hopes and dreams would seem impossible, and they would simply give up. But with Despair trapped in the box, hope would survive. And hope is what keeps humankind optimistic, always looking at the bright side of what is yet to come.

Uh-oh. Now look at what I've done! But maybe this is just temporary. Surely I can catch these horrible things and put them back in their little box where they won't bother anyone. . . .

