

## Hope

Hope may be the most vital, yet the most cruel, of human emotions. Remaining hopeful can both persuade us to continue when our path forward is blocked and be a torture that prevents us from letting go of something we have lost, thus ironically keeping us from moving forward.

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In Greek myth, Pandora was given a box by the gods and told never to open it. Overcome by curiosity, she ignored that warning and opened it anyway, releasing all the evils of the world – terror, grief, revenge, jealousy, and a host of others. She slammed the lid closed, but it was too late. She then heard a scratching sound from inside – one had been trapped. It told her that it was called hope, and she had to release it, because it would make the others bearable.

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This story is often told to illustrate how hope helps us to survive the difficulties our existence can inflict upon us. Yet so many people miss the obvious corollary: hope was itself one of the evils of the world. Hope can be both a blessing and a curse. It is up to each of us to decide whether to listen to it.

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What was Pandora given?

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What warning did she ignore?

For you, is hope a blessing or a curse?