

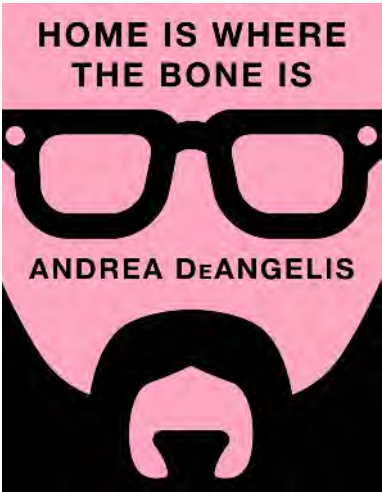
About the poem

This poem was inspired by the HBO documentary - I am evidence and the appalling reality of the rape kit backlog remaining untested in the hundreds of thousands. I was horrified by the idea of these boxes in a warehouse where birds were actually making nests of the evidence, of these women's bodies and pain, evidence that could put the rapists behind bars. And who better to open the boxes than Pandora?

Pandora opening the box is frequently seen as cataclysmic but in this case, she's a warrior, doing

what is necessary for justice. All the emotions from the collective violations released giving the victims hope.

MORE TIMELESS TALES STORIES  
BY ANDREA:



Home is Where the Bone is  
Issue 5  
Baba Yaga



The World is Inside  
Issue 7  
The Snow Queen

**ANDREA  
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**RAPE  
KITS**

This is a box.

It sits unopened along with other sealed boxes  
in a police storage unit at the edge of a city  
where birds make nests of their violations.

There are other boxes  
in other warehouses  
in other cities too.

About 400,000 and counting.

If it's an infinite number on repeat,  
then why count it at all?

But Pandora, you must  
you are the counter of all things,  
the opener of secrets.

Its contents are untested  
along with other evidence  
no one deemed important enough to open.

This is a body which is also evidence  
but no one deemed worthy  
to examine or believe.

The evidence may be untested  
but the bodies and minds  
have been put through unthinkable ordeals.

If Pandora were to open these ignored boxes  
What would she release?

Tactile evidence of damage  
even if healed will never be the same.

Blood, urine, hair and fiber,  
screams, hits and kicks,  
shame and rage.

The invisible boxes ache  
like heads kicked in  
they can't breathe  
contain skin under torn fingernails  
a stutter of complete paralysis.

All those clotted feelings  
flying misshapen things –

Stinging insects  
tiny but mighty moths  
the vengeful Black Buck  
the warrior Streaked Sphinx  
the terrifying black-winged Dahana  
the avenging Red-tailed Spector  
and finally the wrathful hornet moth.

You call it a reckoning  
I call it hope. ■

A word about the moths – in some versions of the myth, the “bad” things released are described as moths and I thought what if these moths were avenging goddesses and in my internet sleuthing came across Theodore D. Sargent’s invaluable *Working Paper of Attributes – Goddesses – Moths*. I have always thought that moths were underrated.

**Andrea DeAngelis** is at times a poet, writer, shutterbug and musician living in New York City. Her writing has recently appeared in Umbrella Factory and Niteblade. Andrea also sings and plays guitar in the indie rock band MAKAR ([www.makarmusic.com](http://www.makarmusic.com)) who are in the midst of recording their third album, *Fancy Hercules*. For more, visit her website [www.andreadeangelis.com](http://www.andreadeangelis.com).



