

## **NPAT RSC Character Information - Helena**

Helena is a young woman in Athens. She is in love with Demetrius, but he is not in love with her. Instead, he loves her best friend Hermia. As a way of convincing Demetrius to love her, Helena tells him about Hermia's plan to run away with Lysander and together they go into the forest to find her. While there, Lysander and Demetrius fall under a magic spell that makes them both fall in love with Helena. She is confused, enraged, and upset by this turn of events, eventually falling out with Hermia. By the end of the play, Demetrius falls in love with her and they get married.

Facts we learn about Helena at the start of the play:

- She is desperate for Demetrius' love and would follow him anywhere.
- She betrays her best friend's secret to make Demetrius happy.
- She is well-regarded throughout Athens as being Hermia's equal.

### **THINGS THEY SAY**

'Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.' (Helena, 1:1)

**Helena is just as attractive as Hermia. She cannot understand what it is that makes Demetrius love Hermia and not her.**

'I am your spaniel, and, Demetrius, The more you beat me, I will fawn on you.' (Helena, 2:1)

**She puts being loved by Demetrius ahead of her own safety and self-worth.**

### **THINGS OTHERS SAY ABOUT THEM**

'...and she, sweet lady, dotes, Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry...' (Lysander, 1:1)

**Helena is desperately in love with Demetrius and the court know about it.**

'Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit, For I am sick when I do look on thee.' (Demetrius, 2:1)

**Helena annoys Demetrius and he cannot bear the sight of her.**