

NPAT RSC Character Information - Hermia

Hermia is a young woman in Athens and Egeus' daughter. She is in love with Lysander but unfortunately Egeus wants her to marry Demetrius. Egeus invokes an ancient law that states he can choose his daughter's husband, or she will be put to death. The Duke Theseus upholds the law and condemns Hermia to death. She and Lysander decide to elope to escape the judgement. In the woods they are chased by Demetrius and Helena, Hermia's best friend. Whilst there Lysander and Demetrius fall under a magic spell that makes them both fall in love with Helena. A huge argument ensues before more magic is used to work out all the problems. At the end of the play Theseus overrules Egeus, with Hermia and Lysander marrying.

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

- She believes she has the right to choose her own husband.
- She stands up for herself against all the odds and defies her father to run away with Lysander.
- Hermia and Helena have grown up together as best friends.

THINGS THEY SAY

'I know not by what power I am made bold.' (Hermia, 1:1).

Hermia argues her case, even in front of the Duke.

'I frown upon him, yet he loves me still...I give him curses, yet he gives me love...The more I hate, the more he follows me. His folly, Helena, is none of mine.' (Hermia, 1:1)

Hermia has done nothing to make Demetrius love her and she does not want to upset her best friend.

THINGS OTHERS SAY ABOUT THEM

'O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd. She was a vixen when she went to school, And though she be but little, she is fierce.' (Helena, 3:2).

Hermia is feisty and stands up for herself.