

Act 1 Scene 1 notes

Theseus, the Duke of Athens, is getting married in four days to Hippolyta, the Queen of the Amazons that he captured in battle.

Egeus comes to complain that his daughter, Hermia, refuses to marry Demetrius, the man he has chosen for her. Instead, she wants to marry Lysander, a man who loves her more, and that she loves in return.

Theseus tells Hermia that she must do as her father wishes, or else face execution or condemnation to the life

of a nun, never to marry throughout her life.

Lysander suggests that he and Hermia elope the following night at his aunt's house. She agrees to this plan.

Helena tells Hermia that she wishes she had her beauty and skills, as she cannot get Demetrius' attention. Hermia says the more she tries to hate him, the more he loves her instead.

Lysander and Hermia share their secret plan to elope with Helena, who appears excited. Later, when she's by herself, though, she says she'll tell

Demetrius the plan so he can
intervene and spoil it.