



### I WEAR THE MASK OF THE INNAMORATO

A role that often treads the stage bare-faced, but one used to secrets, plots and false names. Anything to conquer a kiss or a smile. Yet this is no comedy, but a tragedy, born under auspicious stars and now teetering over a yawning precipice's brink. Not by ill fortune, not by war or by mistake.

I am the cause, the one and only antagonist.

The **Capitano** supports my reasons, of which they seem to believe I have many, and they would defend me by sword or by musket. They have no great name, but they lack not courage, nor have they ever given their friendship away for vile flattery. The impetus of my second strengthens my arm, refines my aim and chases away the shadow of defeat. Youth beats experience, 'tis the natural course of things; the more they repeat it, the more I believe them. But then my fabric's shattered: I forgot their heart.

Yes, the heart that beats under the mask of the **Magnifico**, where once I saw a mentor and now I see an enemy. For how long can a honourable spirit stand to grow in the shadow of another? Too long have I suffered to make myself inferior, to avoid testing my worth and discovering I do not lack it. They taught me the honour that is our ruin and one day they revealed to me that great souls can calmly suffer. So today our bullets shall speak in our stead.

Ours is a tacit agreement, and if they have brought the **Servitore** by their side, I know it is not out of spite or mockery, but because people of virtue walk alone, and walking at their pace is a bitter task for most. I used to listen to the Magnifico's wisdom in the Servitore's company, and I would have sworn that drop by drop, that wisdom could wear down even the brute's stony soul.

Never shall I see whether I was right.

Not even the **Giudice**, keeper of my hope, could stop the wheel of fate. I, disgusted as I am with this age of puny scribblers, till the last moment I dared hope that there would be an escape to honour. A hidden clause, a forgotten comma, a codicil that would let me push away this bitter chalice. I hoped in vain. It is just that we follow this course, although it is far from the Giudice's will. They have agreed out of affection to judge a duel, which spits upon the law they have sworn to serve, while I am ready to betray all of my affections in the name of the honour I have promised to uphold.