

## One Flesh, One End: Heroic Grief and Sacrifice in *The Locked Tomb*

Gideon: “If you think anything I did, I did to make her love me, then you don’t know anything about her and me. I’m her cavalier [...] I’m her *sword* [...] Always your sword, my umbral sovereign; in life, in death, in anything beyond life or death that they want to throw at thee and me. I died knowing that you’d hate me for dying; but Nonagesimus, you hating me always meant more than anyone else in this hot and stupid universe loving me. At least I’d had your full attention” (Tamsyn Muir, *Harrow the Ninth*, 436).

The first two books of Tamsyn Muir’s science fiction series *The Locked Tomb* center around the complex and tragic relationship between a lesbian necromancer and her sword-wielding cavalier. The first book, *Gideon the Ninth*, deals with the process of the two characters becoming a weapon of war through lycorhood, and hinges on themes of heroic sacrifice. The second book, *Harrow the Ninth* deals more with the aftermath of sacrifice, as well as the loss of self to grief. This paper proposes to take these two books in conversation with the characters of Achilles and Patroclus in *The Iliad* in order to more fully read the threads of heroic grief and sacrifice that are present in *The Locked Tomb*, with a particular focus on the sacrifice of the self.

### Initial Bibliography

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