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***Amissa Est Coniunx; Cur Ego Et Ipse Moror? Male Marital Suicide in Valerius Maximus***

Roman men commit suicide in ancient literature for a number of reasons, yet self-killing due to grief, particularly grief over the loss of a wife, is nearly unattested. Only Tiberian author Valerius Maximus in his *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* remarks upon male suicide under such circumstances, and he is explicit about what these two *exempla* represent in his work: Gaius Plautius Numida (4.6.2) and Marcus Plautius (4.6.3) kill themselves to demonstrate their *amor coniugalis*. While Gaius initially resembles Cato the Younger in the method of suicide, his expression of grief while stabbing himself (*doloris inpotens*) and when ripping off his bandages (*luctus acerbitate*) highlight his emotions. Noting that Marcus experiences the “same love” (*ita amoris*), Valerius differentiates these men from the Stoic, masculine model of behavior.

Therefore, this paper will explore how the suicides of Gaius Plautius Numida and Marcus Plautius provide a unique perspective on male suicide and grief in Tiberian Rome in the following ways: (1) It will show how the deaths of these two men diverge from Cato’s ideal masculine suicide. (2) It will examine the female gendering of grief in the writing of Cicero and in Roman funerary customs, as well as the implications for Gaius and Marcus’s motivations. (3) It will contrast the circumstances of Gaius and Marcus’s deaths with the suicides of married women in the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*, in order demonstrate how such a comparison further emasculates the male characters. (4) It will conclude that despite the atypical and effeminizing presentations of these suicides, Valerius’s explicit praise for the men highlights his respect for marital devotion. As a consequence, these two passages are essential in creating an informed understanding of the affection individual male citizens could feel for their wives and the lengths they went for grief and love.