

The War with Nemea: *Furor* and Delay in the Nemea Episode of Statius' *Thebaid*

1) Stat. *Theb.* 4.809-823

fremunt undae longusque a fontibus amnis
diripitur: modo lene uirens et gurgite puro
perspicuus nunc sordet aquis egestus ab imis
alueus. inde toros riparum et proruta turbant
gramina. iam crassus caenoque et puluere torrens, 820
quamquam expleta sitis, bibitur tamen. **agmina bello
decertare putes iustumque in gurgite Martem
perfurere aut captam tolli uictoribus urbem.**

The waves roar and the long river is torn from its source: the river, just now green, calm, and transparent with a clear current, now it is dirty with the river bed torn up from the deepest waters. Then the grass tumbling down disturbs the edges of the banks. And now, though muddy and rushing with filth and dirt, nevertheless they drink. **You would think armies were fighting a war and a pitched battle raged in the stream or that a captured city was sacked by the victors.**

2) Stat. *Theb.* 5.579-582

illum et cognatae stagna indignantia Lerna,
floribus et vernis adsuetae spargere Nymphae, 580
et Nemees reptatus ager lucosque per omnes
silvicolae fracta **gemuistis** harundine Fauni.

Him you **lamented**, you scorned pools of kindred Lerna, and you Nymphs accustomed to scatter the land with spring flowers, and you field of Nemea he crawled through, and you forest-dwelling Fauns who lamented him throughout the entire forest on your broken reed.

3) Stat. *Theb.* 6.90-107

sternitur extemplo ueteres incaedua ferro 90
silua comas, largae qua non **opulentior** umbrae
Argolicos inter saltusque educta Lycaeos
extulerat super astra caput: stat sacra senectae
numine nec solos hominum transgressa uetero
fertur auos, Nymphas etiam mutasse superstes 95
Faunorumque greges. aderat miserabile luco
excidium: fugere ferae, nidoque tepenti
absiliunt, metus urguet, aues. **cadit** ardua fagus
Chaoniumque nemus brumaeque inlaesa cupressus.
procumbunt piceae flammis alimenta supremis 100
ornique iliceaeque trabes metuendaque suco
taxus et infandos belli potura cruores
fraxinus atque situ non expugnabile robur.
hinc audax abies et odoro uulnere pinus
scinditur, adclinant intonsa cacumina terrae 105
alnus amica fretis nec inhospita uitibus ulmus.
dat gemitum tellus.

Immediately they cut down the forest whose ancient boughs had never been cut with iron. There is no forest growing in the woodlands of Argolis and Lycaeus **richer** in plentiful shade that had raised its head above the stars: it stands sacred in the majesty of old age, considered to have surpassed not only the ancestors of humans in age but even to have seen the Nymphs and herds of Fauns change. Pitiably destruction was at hand for the grove: terror urging them the wild animals flee and the birds leap from their warm nests. The high beech **falls** and the forest of the Chaonian oak and the cypress impervious to winter. **The spruces fall**, fuel for funeral fires, and ash trees and the trunks of holm-oaks and the yew whose sap is to be feared and the ash that will drink the cursed blood of war and the oak impervious to rot. Then the daring fir and the pine with its fragrant wounds are cut and the alder, friend of the ocean, and the elm, hospitable to vines, touch their uncut heads to the earth. **The earth groans.**

4) Verg. *Aen.* 6.179-182

itur in **antiquam silvam**, stabula alta ferarum;
procumbunt piceae, sonat icta securibus ilex 180
fraxineaeque trabes cuneis et fissile robur
scinditur, advolvunt **ingentis montibus ornos.**

They go into the **ancient forest**, the lofty den of wild animals. **The spruces fall**, the holm-oak resounds struck by axes and beams of ash and oak, easily broken, are split with wedges, and they roll **huge ash trees down the mountain.**

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5) Verg. *Aen.* 2.624-633

Tum vero omne mihi visum considerare in ignis
Ilium et ex imo verti Neptunia Troia: 625
ac veluti summis **antiquam in montibus ornum**
cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant
eruere agricolae certatim, illa usque minatur
et tremefacta comam concusso vertice nutat,
vulneribus donec paulatim evicta supremum 630
congenuit traxitque iugis avulsa ruinam.

Then all Ilium seemed to me to sink into the fires and
Neptunian Troy seemed to topple over from its
depths: just as when **on the heights of a mountain**
the locals eagerly strive to bring down **an ancient**
ash cut with iron and repeated blows of axes, and the
tree all the time threatens [to fall] and, its peak
shaken and leaves trembling, nods, until little by little
overcome by wounds finally **groaned** and torn from
the mountainside dragged itself down in ruin.

6) Verg. *Aen.* 2.424-430

ilicet obruimur numero, primusque Coroebus
Penelei dextra divae armipotentis ad aram 425
procumbit; cadit et Rhipeus, iustissimus unus
qui fuit in Teucris et servantissimus aequi
(dis aliter visum); pereunt Hypanisque Dymasque
confixi a sociis; nec te tua plurima, Panthu,
labentem pietas nec Apollinis infula texit. 430

At once we are outnumbered, and Coroebus first by
the right hand of Peneleus by the altar of the warrior
goddess **falls**; and **falls** Rhipeus, the most righteous
man in Troy and greatest protector of justice (but the
gods thought otherwise); then died Hypanis and
Dymas, pierced by allies; neither did your utmost
devotion nor your fillet of Apollo protect you when
you fell, Panthus.

7) Stat. *Theb.* 6.110-113

linquunt **flentes** dilecta locorum 110
otia cana Pales Siluanusque arbiter umbrae
semideumque pecus. migrantibus **adgemit** illis
silua nec amplexae dimittunt robora Nymphae:

Weeping they leave their beloved homes, ancient
places of tranquility, Pales and Silvanus, the lord of
the shade, and the semi-divine flock. The forest
groans for those leaving but the Nymphs, embracing
the oaks, do not release them.

8) Stat. *Theb.* 6.114-117

ut cum possessas audis uictoribus arces
dux raptare dedit, uix signa audita nec urbem 115
inuenias: **ducunt sternuntque abiguntque**
feruntque
inmodici, minor ille fragor quo bella gerebant.

Just as when a general gives a captured city to his
greedy victorious soldiers to plunder, scarcely is the
signal heard and you would no longer find a city:
wantonly **they lead away and scatter and plunder**
and carry off [the city]; they make less noise when
they make war.

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