

## Fated Fury: How the Furies Establish Supremacy over the Fates in Statius' *Thebaid*

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**Table 1: Frequency of Fates vs. Furies**

	Fates		Furies		Total
1	8	50.00	8	50.00	16
2	2	28.57	5	71.43	7
3	12	85.71	2	14.29	14
4	6	42.86	8	57.14	14
5	6	42.86	8	57.14	14
6	5	71.43	2	28.57	7
7	4	40.00	6	60.00	10
8	11	52.38	10	47.62	21
9	2	50.00	2	50.00	4
10	7	87.50	1	12.50	8
11	5	17.86	23	82.14	28
12	0	0.00	9	100.00	9
Total	68	44.74	84	55.26	152

1. *incipit ex alto (grave et immutabile sanctis pondus adest verbis, et vocem Fata sequuntur)*<sup>1</sup>  
(1.213)

From on high he [Jupiter] begins (his holy words have weight heavy and immutable and the Fates accompany/follow/obey his voice)

2. *sic Fata mihi nigraeque Sororum iuravere colus: manet haec ab origine mundi fixa dies bello, populi que in proelia nati.* (3.241-243)

Thus the Fates, the dark distaffs of the Sisters, have sworn to me. This day stands fixed for war from the world's origin, these peoples were born to battle.

3. *immoto deducimur orbe Fatorum; veteres seraeque in proelia causas*  
(7.197-198)

Our lot is spun by the changeless wheel of the Fates; ancient and belated are the causes that lead to the war.

4. *sed tu super urbe moveri parce tua: non hoc statui sub tempore rebus occasum Aoniis*  
(7.218-220)

But you refrain from being troubled concerning your city: I have not decreed an end to Aonian history at this time

5. *nec iam opus est Furiis; tantum mirantur et astant laudantes, hominumque dolent plus posse furores.*  
(11.537-538)

There is no more need of the Furies; they only marvel and stand by applauding, chagrined that men's madness is mightier than their own.

<sup>1</sup> All Latin text from Shackleton Bailey 2003a and 2003b; English text *ibid.*, slightly adapted.

6. *vosque malis hominum, Stygiae, iam parcite, divae*  
(11.576) And you, Stygian goddesses, spare now the ills of mankind.
7. *furor illa et movit Erinys*  
*et pater et genetrix et regna oculique cadentes*  
(11.619-620) 'Twas madness that caused it and a Fury and my father and my mother and the throne and falling eyes
8. *Furias averte ac moenia lustra*  
*discessu Thebana tuo.* (11.670-671) Turn away your Furies and purge the walls of Thebes by your departure.
9. *sive locum monstis iterum Fortuna parabat,*  
*seu dissensuros servaverat Eumenis ignes.*  
(12.422-423) Whether Fortune was preparing another occasion for a prodigy or a Fury preserved the fire for discord.
10. *pallidus Eumenidum veluti commiserit ignes*  
*Orcus, uterque minax globus et conatur uterque longius*  
(12.433-435) As though pale Orcus had set the torches of the Furies in conflict, each mass of fire threatens and tries to outstrip the other.
11. *mox hospita sedes*  
*vicit et Oedipodae Furias* (12.509-510) Soon the hospitable abode conquered the Furies of Oedipus
12. *quos vetat igne Creon Stygiaeque a limine portae,*  
*ceu sator Eumenidum aut Lethaei portitor amnis,*  
*summovet ac dubio caelique Erebiue sub axe detinet.*  
(12.558-561) Them does Creon forbid the fire and bar from the threshold of the Stygian gate, as though he were father of the Furies or ferryman of Lethe river, keeping them in doubt between heaven and Erebus.
13. *quaenam ista novos induxit Erinys*  
*regnorum mores?* (12.590-591) What Fury is this that brings strange manners of kings?
14. *illic Poenarum exercita Thebis*  
*agmina et anguicomae ducent vexilla Sorores.*  
(12.646-647) On the other side are the hosts of the Avengers, long in service at Thebes, and the snake-haired Sisters will lead the standards.
15. *Argolici, quibus haec datur hostia, manes,*  
*pandite Tartareum chaos ultricesque parate*  
*Eumenidas, venit ecce Creon!* (12.771-773) Argive ghosts, to whom this victim is offered, open wide the void of Tartarus, make ready avenging Furies, for see, Creon comes!
16. *mediaeque in sedibus aulae*  
*Eumenidas subitas* (12.695-696) In the midst of the palace he sees to his dismay the Furies suddenly appear
17. *indue quod madidum tabo diadema cruentis*  
*unguibus abripui* (1.82-83) Put on your head this gore-soaked diadem that I tore off with my bloody nails
18. *ilicet igne Iovis lapsisque citatior astris*  
*tristibus exsiluit ripis* (1.92-93) At once she leapt up from the gloomy bank, swifter than Jove's fire or falling stars

19. *sic urget, et ultro  
vitantem aspectus etiam pudibundaque longe  
ora reducentem premit astridentibus hyrdis  
intentatque faces; deiectam in lumina pallam  
diva trahit magnoque fugit questura Tonanti.*  
(11.492-496)
20. *has ubi vipereo tactas ter utramque flagella  
Eumenis in furias animumque redire priorem  
impulit, erumpunt non agnoscentibus agris.*  
(7.579-581)
21. *Atropos hos atque ipsa novat Proserpina cultus.*  
(1.111)
22. *quod si adeo placui deflenda in tempora vates,  
dicam equidem, quo me Lachesis, quo torva Megaera  
usque sinunt*  
(4.635-637)
23. *iamque in miseros pensum onme Sororum  
scinditur, et Furiae rapuerunt licia Parcis.*  
(8.381-382)
24. *nunc tendo chelyn; satis arma referre  
Aonia et geminis sceptrum exitiale tyrannis  
nec furiis post fata<sup>2</sup>*  
(1.33-35)
- So she [Tisiphone] urges, and as the other [Pietas] shrinks from her very aspect and draws her own modest countenance far back, presses her with hissing serpents and brandishes her torch. The goddess draws her cloak down over her eyes and flees to complain to the great Thunderer.
- The Fury touched each of them [tigresses, previously gentle] thrice with her snaky whip and drove them to return to their mad mood of yore. They break out and the fields know them not.
- Atropos and Proserpina herself refurbish her attire.
- But if I [Laius] am so welcome as a prophet for tearful times, speak I will, so far as Lachesis and grim Megaera permit.
- And now against the wretches all the Sisters' wool is torn and the Furies have snatched the threads from the Parcae.
- For now I but tune my lyre; enough to recount Aonian arms, scepter fatal to tyrants twain, fury outlasting death (or, nor furies subordinate to fates)

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<sup>2</sup> *Fata* and *furia* not included in calculation of frequency since they do not directly reference either the Fates or Furies.

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