In Book II of the Aeneid, Aeneas is presented with his destiny to leave the overrun Troy to go and found the Roman race. Throughout Book II Aeneas struggles with the balance of his thoughts and he too is overrun, but with an excess of passion, rage and anger. There are many instances of furor being present within the book but there is also a presence of pietas (duty to family, country and gods etc…). This is introduced by other elements of the literature such as divine intervention and the needs of family. Virgil conveys the elements of furor and pietas in the book by employing the use of fire imagery, including; destructive fires, the metaphorical fires of passion, fury and rage and heavenly non-destructive fires.

Line 172: *vix positum castris simulacrum: arsere coruscae luminibus flammae arrectis.*

English: They’d hardly stood her image up in the Greek camp when flickering fire shot from its animated eyes, These lines are describing what happened in the Greek camp when the image/wooden statue of Pallas was stood up after it had been stolen from the Trojans by Odysseus and Diomedes. In this context the fire imagery that Virgil is using is meant to be a heavenly non-destructive fire. But it is still foreshadowing the reflection of a destructive fire from Pallas/Minerva in line 616 later in the text ‘*insedit nimbo effulgens et Gorgone saeva*’ Translating to English as ‘*flaming out of the clouds, her savage Gorgon glaring*’. Virgil uses the omen of Pallas and the imagery of the flaming animated eyes to express the meaning of furor to the reader and show the reader what furor can be translated into the physical presence which is fire. These lines and the omen from Pallas and the fire imagery presented are very important indicators of the event at Troy because it was believed that whoever had possession of the statue would win the war. Some classical scholars believe that the Trojans switched the real statue for a fake which backs up the theory that the overall winners of the war were the Trojans because the Romans who were descended from the Trojans conquered Greece.

Line 289: *He says ‘escape, son of the goddess, tear yourself from the flames!’* This line refers to the dream that Aeneas has in which Hector the slain Prince of Troy tells Aeneas of his destiny to found the great Roman race. In these particular lines and at this time in the book, Aeneas does not know Troy has been breached. So in effect Hector is warning Aeneas not to be overtaken by his sense of furor and to stay true to his sense of pietas. Furor is meant in the sense of Aeneas trying to defend the city blinded by an excess of anger fury and desperation. (1) Also in this line the flames is used as a reflection of furor. The flames are his anger and fury for the overrun city which Hector is telling Aeneas to tear himself from. The fact that Hector addresses Aeneas as son of the goddess incorporates the factor of his duty not only to his mother but also to his family which represents pietas. In this case the fire reference is both physical destructive fire that is tearing up the city, but also metaphorical fire that is connected to furor. I think the imagery is of importance because Virgil is stating what Aeneas has to do physically (leave the ruined city) and mentally (distance himself from his extreme emotion).

Line 297: *sic ait, et manibus vittas Vestamque potentem aeternumque adytis effert penetralibus igem.*

English: … Thus he speaks and brings out with his hands from the innermost shrines the headbands and powerful Vesta, and her eternal fire. These lines describe a part of Aeneas’ dream in which Hector brings out the image of Vesta the goddess of the home and hearth in the form of a lar. This lar is one of the most important lares that Aeneas eventually handles to Italy where they are given a new home. (3) The image of Vesta’s eternal fire is one of the strongest
representations of Aeneas’ pietas. His duty is not only to found the Roman race but to also to preserve Troy’s culture including its household gods. Evidence for the importance of the eternal fire imagery used can be linked to the temple of Vesta in Rome that housed the hearth of Rome that always was kept alight. The eternal fire imagery can also be a reference to the permanence that the Trojan culture on the world in Virgil’s time. The imagery is a heavenly non-destructive fire because of the nature and form of the fire in regard to Vesta.

Line 314: sed glomerare manum bello et concurrere in arcem cum sociis ardent animi.
English: Just my spirit burning to muster troops for battle.

This line describes Aeneas wanting to go and gather troops in order to fight off the invasion parties. This fire type is a metaphorical fire of passion. This can be identified by the use of fire imagery in regard to Aeneas’ spirits that are burning. In this particular line in the struggle between furor and pietas within Aeneas, furor is the feeling that is prevailing to sway Aeneas’ actions. In this case Aeneas’ furor is an excess of anger and grief for Troy. This piece of fire imagery is important because it gives the reader insight into the psyche of Aeneas’ and insight into how Aeneas is dealing with the situation at hand. It also gives an insight into why Aeneas acts the way he does i.e. going after Helen, thus expressing his excess of rage/anger.

Line 414 of translated Aeneid: gloating over us Sinon fans the fires.
This line refers to the Greek man Sinon acting triumphantly. Sinon was left behind with the Greek wooden horse to persuade the Trojans into raising it to their temple high up in the city. With the help of Sinon’s silver tongue the Greeks plan succeeded. The way Virgil describes Sinon as fanning the fires of Troy conjures the connection that Sinon caused the fire and is nurturing it. The imagery that Virgil presents also asserts the character of Sinon into a dominant position. The position of Sinon in the centre of Troy further asserts the Greek prevalence within the city and shows that Troy is indeed lost. The gloating of Sinon and the imagery of the growing fires bring to mind a metaphorical fire of burning passion and glory that represent furor.

Line 355: sic animis iuvenum furor additus.
English: That fired their hearts with the fury of despair.

At this time of the story Aeneas has just given a speech to his gathered men, that has captured their desire to defend the city until the end. In this line furor is the dominant emotion with evidence from the word furor in the Latin. This is a metaphorical fire of rage and fury in regard to the fired hearts of the men. At this point is evident that furor has taken over Aeneas’ emotion because he is now giving a speech that invokes the same emotions within other men. Aeneas is not thinking about his family at this time at all. This shows the reader that Aeneas is still a mortal who is ruled by one emotion at a time. This could foreshadow the loss of Aeneas’ wife Creusa to the flames/Greeks by means of a lack of attentiveness from Aeneas.

Line 594: nate, quis indomitas tantus dolor excitat iras?
This line refers to when Aeneas is about to strike against the cowering Helen when Venus, Aeneas’ mother reveals herself and pleads with him to go back to his family and lead them away from the city. In this particular line Venus is questioning Aeneas’ anger (furor) and his actions because of it. The question in itself was rhetorical but the purpose of the question was to show the audience that a change in Aeneas’ mind set was to come, from furor into pietas. The fire imagery itself was a metaphorical fire of fury, reflective of the level of Aeneas’ anger. This piece of imagery is of importance because it shows a change in Aeneas’ actions from defending the city to leading an escape party. Line 600 also conveys the change from furor to pietas while Venus reminds Aeneas of his defenceless family ‘iam flammae tulerint inimicus et hauserit ensis’ Translating to ‘flames would have swept them off by now’