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**Eat and Be Eaten: Envy and Hunger in the *Metamorphoses***

Among the extended personifications which Ovid showcases in the *Metamorphoses*, his particularly fulsome description of Invidia (2.760-805) stands out. Everything about Ovid's Invidia, who who *carpit...et carpitur una/ suppliciumque suum est* (2.781-2) speaks to the internal effects of envy on the envious person.

Most analyses of Ovid's Invidia (e.g. Dickie 1976; Feeney 1992) treat this figure as a self-contained entity within the *Metamorphoses*. While such approaches have been far from fruitless, I suggest that we may gain a fuller understanding of Invidia and what she signifies by reading her in tandem with Ovid's personification of Fames at 8.788-822. I will argue that Ovid's description of Fames and the larger episode in which she features, the punishment of Erysichthon, correspond significantly to his description of Invidia, further illuminating and defining envy and its effects. Read through Ovid's description of Fames' literal hunger, Invidia becomes both the agent and victim of a figurative moral and ethical famine.

Ovid aligns Invidia and Fames, who are both gaunt and wasted, first by describing them in similar terms: both display *pallor in ore* (2.775; 8.801), *macies* (2.775; 8.807) and oral *rubigine* (2.776; 8.802). These details comment on the respective effects of envy, which eats at its victims and causes them figuratively to eat at themselves, and of hunger, which precludes nourishment.

When we first see Invidia she is eating *vipereas carnes* (2.769). Poisonous snakes are an appropriate meal for poisonous Invidia, Ovid points out, but when we read this in light of Fames' hardscrabble life, as she scratches the barren ground for what little sustenance she can glean (8.799-800), we realize that Invidia's snakes are an equally impoverished meal, indicative not only of Invidia's malignancy but of the moral and emotional starvation which Invidia both causes and suffers from.

The description of Fames' effects on Erysichthon, who is driven to literal self-consumption, reinforces the figurative self-consumption which Invidia enacts. Erysichthon, however, ultimately finds nourishment (*infelix minuendo corpus alebat*, 8.878) through eating himself; neither Invidia, nor those she affects with invidious self-consumption, are ever satisfied. The self-consumption of Invidia and her victims is ongoing. Some hungers, Ovid seems to be saying, are more easily satisfied than others.