



**De Monfort**  
**Joanna Baillie**

*Ever since childhood, De Monfort has despised his schoolmate Rezenvelt, when they encountered each other in a duel that Rezenvelt won. When this pair cross paths again, De Monfort's hatred grows into pure rage. In this speech, De Monfort hides the forest, awaiting Rezenvelt's arrival and the opportunity to take his revenge.*

*(Moonlight. A wild path in a wood, shaded with trees. Enter De Monfort, with a strong expression of disquiet, mixed with fear, upon his face, looking behind him, and bending his ear to the ground, as if he listened to something.)*

**DE MONFORT:** How hollow groans the earth beneath my tread!  
Is there an echo here? Methinks it sounds  
As tho' some heavy footstep follow's me.  
I will advance no father.  
Deep settled shadows rest across the path,  
And thicky-tangled boughs o'erhang this spot.  
O that a tenfold gloom did cover it!  
That 'midst the murky madness I might strike;  
As in the wild confusion of a dream,  
Thinks horrid, bloody, terrible do pass,  
As tho' they pass'd not; nor impress the mind  
With the fix'd clearness of reality.

*(An owl is heard screaming near him.)*

*(Starting.)* What sound is that?

*(Listens, and the owl cries again.)*

It is the screech-owl's cry.  
Foul bird of night! What spirit guides thee here?  
Art thou instinctive drawn to scenes of horror?  
I've heard of this.

*(Pauses and listens.)*

How those fall'n leaves so rustle upon the path,  
With wisp'ring noise, as tho' the earth around me  
Did utter secret things!  
The distant river too, bears to mine ear  
A dismal wailing. O mysterious night!  
Thou art not silent; many tongues hast thou.

A distant gath'ring blast sounds thro' the wood,  
And dark clouds fleetly hasten o'er the sky;  
O! That storm would rise, a raging storm;  
Amidst the roar of warning elements  
I'd lift my hand and strike! But this pale light,  
This calm distinctness of each silly thing,  
Is terrible. (Starting.) Footstems are near -  
He comes! he comes! I'll watch him father on -  
I cannot do it here

*Act 4, Scene 3*