

There is an old tale goes, that Herne
the hunter,
Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
Doth all the winter time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns ;
And there he blasts the tree, and takes¹ the cattle ;
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a
chain

In a most hideous and dreadful manner :
You have heard of such a spirit ; and well you know
The superstitious idle-headed eld²
Received, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

¹ To *take* signifies to seize or strike with a disease, to blast.

² Old age.