



AIR POLLUTION IN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

DR CHLOE PREEDY

KING: How fares our cousin Hamlet?


HAMLET: Excellent, i' faith! Of the chameleon's dish - I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so.

KING: I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet. These words are not mine.

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 3.2.88-93

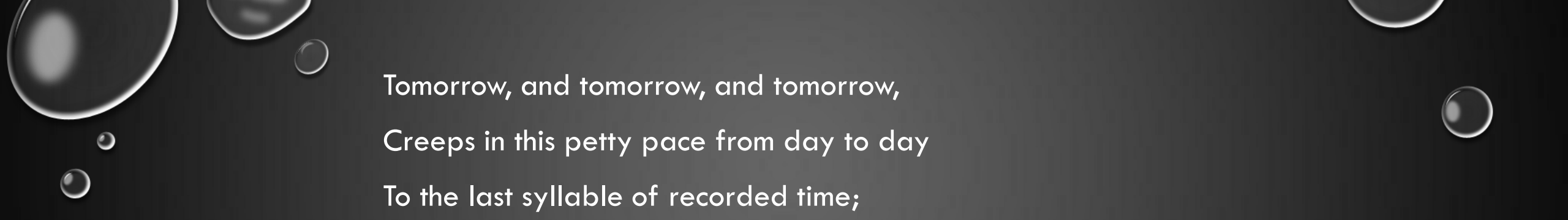
[Plague] proceedeth from the venemous corruption of the humours and spirits of the body, infected by the attraction of corrupted aire, or infection of evil vapours, which have the property to alter mans bodies, and poyson his spirits after a straunge and dangerous qualitie

Thomas Lodge, *A Treatise of the Plague* (London: [Thomas Creede and Valentine Simmes] for Edward White and N[icholas] L[ing], 1603), B2v




This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here; no jutting, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle;
Where they most breed and haunt I have observed
The air is delicate.

William Shakespeare,
Macbeth, ed. Carol Rutter
(Penguin Shakespeare,
2005), 1.6.3-10



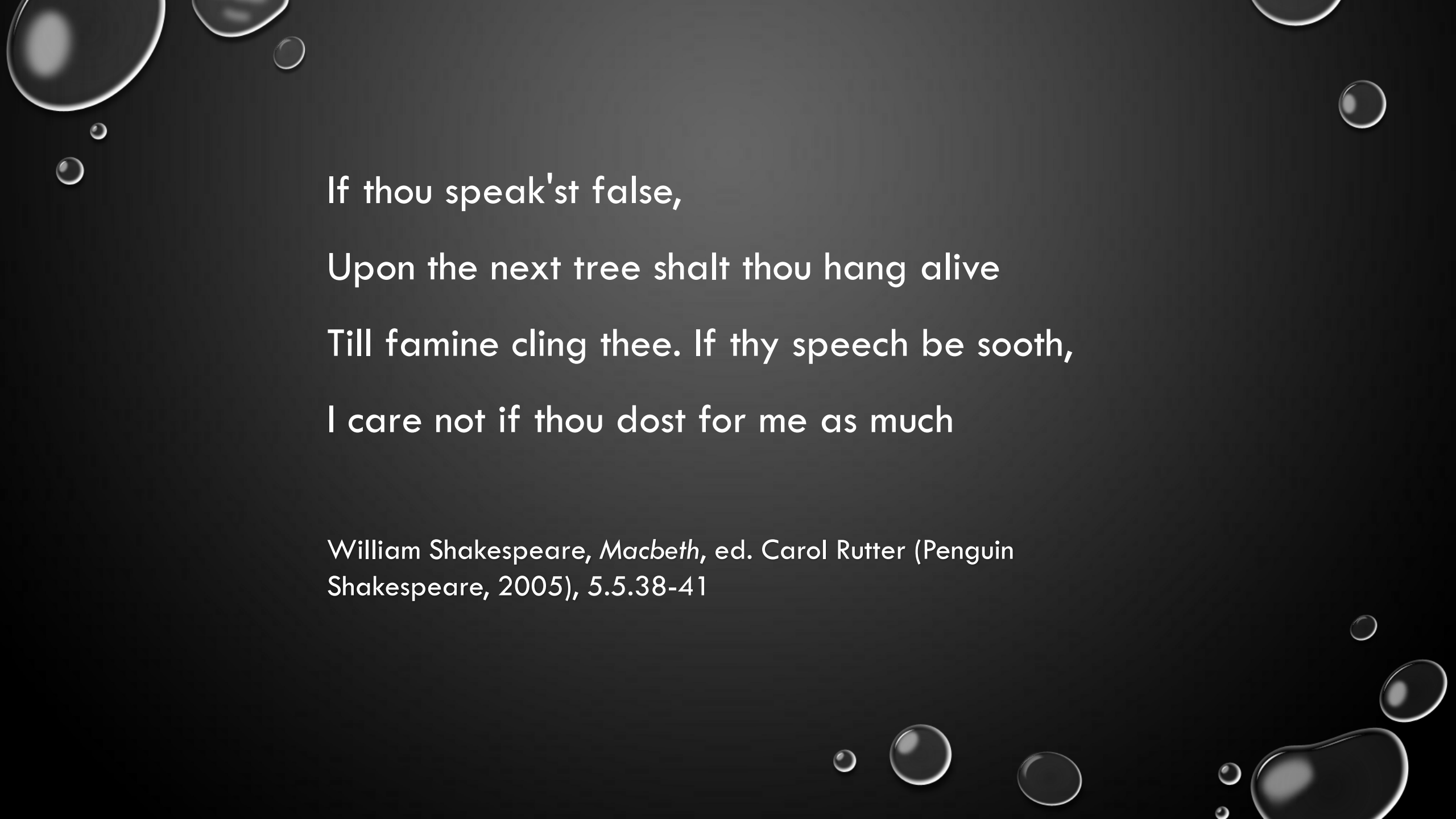
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Carol Rutter (Penguin Shakespeare, 2005), 5.5.19-28



The straunge fables and Theatricall fictions therein, by reason of the exceeding pleasure and singular delight that they yeeld in reading them, do spred and swell unmeasurably, readie to enter forcibly into our conceit so farre as to imprint therin some corrupt opinions: then let us beware, put foorth our hands before us, keepe them backe and staie their course.

Plutarch, *The Philosophie, commonlie called, the Morals*, trans. Philemon Holland (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1603), B4r



If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive
Till famine cling thee. If thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Carol Rutter (Penguin Shakespeare, 2005), 5.5.38-41