

HAMLET TO HAMILTON

Season One, Episode Ten

Silences, Spacing, Stage Directions & Shared Lines

TEXTS

White Space for Silence, Left Justified:

Hamlet, William Shakespeare (Act II, Scene II)

Note: All spacing left justifies in earlier texts. Modern texts can choose where to place white space (not just left justified).

In this version, notice how each line with extra white space creates a new stanza.

HAMLET.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
 Is it not monstrous that this player here,
 But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
 Could force his soul so to his own conceit
 That from her working all his visage wann'd,
 Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
 With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
 For Hecuba!
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
 That he should weep for her? What would he do,
 Had he the motive and the cue for passion
 That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
 And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
 Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
 The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,
 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property and most dear life
 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
 As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?
 Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play 's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

White space for Silence, Intentional Placement:
Cupid and Psyche, Emily C. A. Snyder (Act III, Scene 3)

Note: Modern texts can choose to indent shorter lines to indicate where to place silence vs. vocalization.

As before, notice how each line with extra white space creates a new stanza.

CUPID.

Go, fool! Gloat.
 Your god is dead; the globe unhinged;
 Th'unguarded gateways to Olympus' crown
 Exposed. By *Psyche*—O!
 We are weakling gods! To be usurped
 By Reason's proud, unyielding ice-queen *harlot!*
 Virgin. (Nay, she's a virgin sure...)—yet not so chaste;
 There's fire in her yet, 'twill burn me cold.
 I'll have her.
Jade and strumpet! Where do you hide, my sweet?
 I'll have thee, *whore*—know thee, inhabit thee—
 Cleft thee in two and die in the remains—I'll—
 (*To ADONIS.*) But stay!...stay. I will be well.
 Sad confessor, fear me not. Nay, sit. Sit!
 Stay—and sit. I cannot kill thee twice.
 But soft.
 I am...
 ...Remembered of a thing. What was it?
 Of something soft—*remember!* Of something...
 Fragile as a newborn's sigh, as lovely
 As the dawn when sea and sky are one, as...
 Innocent as a window with new linens.
 O, there was Eden-breath once in these lungs,
 Eden-kisses on my lips, Eden-thoughts
 Within my all-too fevered brain. Pity me,
 Confessor. I am more Death's bonds slave—*bitch*—
 Than thee in all thy chains. But see, there's blood
 Upon my hands. It's strange there should be blood;
 Is't thine? O—she is lovely. My mistress,
 And my murderer.
 Nay, friend—take pity, pray, and tell me, too:
 Where the heart of *Psyche* lies? I'll eat it.
 And be made whole at last.

Silences through Spacing, Punctuation, Crossed Out and Incomplete Lines:
The Lifted Instants Before the Fall: A Tale of Troy, Becca Musser (Act IV, Scene 1)

ALETA. What did you see?!

CASSANDRA.

...There's rain...
 ...It's splashing on the ground, but it's—
 It's wrong. It's red. It's so vibrantly red
 And you're lying in it, in that puddle of crimson
 And you're reaching toward something—

Toward nothing. There's nothing there.

There's no one there.
 Your sightless eyes are pleading,
 But not even the gods are looking.

*(CASSANDRA looks up at ALETA who is frozen,
 horrified.)*

Please tell me I'm crazy...?

Please tell me my visions are nothing, please—
 Tell me this isn't real.

Everyone says they're lies and ravings...

That's it. I'm a liar. I'm crazy. I'm full of shit!
 Complete and total BULLSHIT! The wind will not blow,
 The gulls will not call, the rain will not fall, and you—
 And you will not [die.]

You won't.

If I can save Hector, maybe it will all—
 Maybe none of it will—

(CASSANDRA stands and brings ALETA up with her.)

I have a new vision now. My vision.

We'll run. We'll go right now. Before the wind, before
 The rain, before the birds...
 Before the fire...

We'll go north where the trees are green
 And they have never heard of war.
 Where the sun shines in soft, warm beams
 And the wind whispers sweet love songs.
 Where we can fit all of our problems into a single leaf,
 And send it downstream to disappear in the ocean.

Will you go with me?

ALETA.

No.

Silences through Crossed-Out and Incomplete Lines:

The Siege Perilous, Emily C. A. Snyder (Act I, Scene 5)

ARTHUR.

A-A-A daughter...! Agravaine, my d[~~daughter~~—I...almost [killed you]—!
 (To AGRAVAINE.) I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I didn't believe [you when you told me]—
 (To MORGAN.) You said I didn't have a [child]—you said I couldn't...
 All those years, thinking I was... "less than"—or unable
 To have the daughter that I dreamt of—and I [~~almost killed her~~]...

(He pulls himself together. Not quite approaching, but:)

ARTHUR.

Agravaine! Such a pretty name. I didn't know—
 O, child. Thou shouldst have raiment like a Queen.
 Indeed, thou shalt.

Silent Lines: *The Other, Other Woman*, Emily C. A. Snyder (Act III, Scene 15)

VALENTINE. I should have known better than to fight with a nun.

GENEVIÈVE. You keep saying that: but I'm really not one!

VALENTINE. Yes, you are. You live here, within this convent.

GENEVIÈVE. Yes, I *live here*, because my childhood was spent
In an abbey, contented.

VALENTINE. But you're in this place, now.

GENEVIÈVE. But that doesn't follow that I've taken a *vow*.
(*Whispering; teasing.*) Valentine: I'm not a nun.

VALENTINE. But you are.

GENEVIÈVE. But I'm not.

VALENTINE. But *you are*.

GENEVIÈVE. But *I'm not*.

GENEVIÈVE.

VALENTINE.

(*They drink.*)

VALENTINE. But...you're a princess?

GENEVIÈVE. A bastard. But yes, technically.

VALENTINE. And...a *virgin*?

GENEVIÈVE. Yes. Technically.

VALENTINE...

GENEVIÈVE.

GENEVIÈVE.

VALENTINE!

(*They. Drink.*)

Interior Stage Direction: *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare (Act III, Scene 1)

Note that the interior or embedded stage directions are highlighted for convenience.

LORD POLONIUS. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves. *(To OPHELIA.)* Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this—
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

KING CLAUDIUS. *(Aside.)* O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

LORD POLONIUS. I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.

Stage Directions as Gifts to Production: *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder (Act I, Scene 1)

(No curtain.)

(No scenery.)

(The audience, arriving, sees an empty stage in half-light. Presently the STAGE MANAGER, hat on and pipe in mouth, enters and begins placing a table and three chairs down-stage left, and a table and three chairs downstage right. He also places a low bench at the corner of what will be the Webb house, left.)

(“Left” and “right” are from the point of view of the actor facing the audience. “Up” is toward the back wall.)

(As the house lights go down he has finished setting the stage and leaning against the right proscenium pillar watches the late arrivals in the audience.)

(When the auditorium is in complete darkness he speaks:)

Effective Stage Directions: *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder (Act III, Scene 1)

EMILY. *(In a loud voice to the STAGE MANAGER.)* I can't. I can't go on. It goes so fast. We don't have time to look at one another.

(She breaks down sobbing.)

(The lights dim on the left half of the stage. MRS. WEBB disappears.)

I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed. Take me back—up the hill—to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look.

Good-by, Good-by, world. Good-by, Grover's Corners...Mama and Papa. Good-by to clocks ticking...and Mama's sunflowers. And food and coffee. And new ironed dresses and hot baths...and sleeping and waking up. Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you.

(She looks toward the STAGE MANAGER and asks abruptly, through her tears:)

Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it?—every, every minute?

Less Effective Stage Directions: *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder (Act III, Scene 1)

EMILY. I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed. Take me back—up the hill—to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look.

(She looks around.) Good-by, Good-by, world. *(She looks at the town sign.)* Good-by, Grover's Corners...*(She looks at the house.)* Mama and Papa. *(She looks at the clock.)* Good-by to clocks ticking...*(She looks at the garden.)* and Mama's sunflowers. *(She looks at the kitchen table.)* And food and coffee. *(She looks at the wardrobe.)* And new ironed dresses and hot baths...*(She looks at the bed.)* and sleeping and waking up. *(She looks around.)* Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you.

Silence in Stage Direction & Space:

Cupid and Psyche, Emily C. A. Snyder (Act V, Scene 2, 2018 Revision)

(CUPID lies down with his back towards us, one foot in the grave.)

(Time passes, as the lights begin to dim, except the single light from Heaven.)

(The world returns to silence. CUPID turns over on his back. Looks upward at the lamp. Reaches upward as though he could still touch it. And with a sigh...)

(All the lights extinguish.)

(The end of everything.)

(...)

(...)

(..

..until:)

PSYCHE. *(A lantern.)* Husband?

Shared Line: *King John*, William Shakespeare (Act III, Scene 3)

KING JOHN. Death.

HUBERT. My lord?

KING JOHN. A grave.

HUBERT. He shall not live.

KING JOHN. Enough.

Shared Line: *Wait for It*, Lin-Manuel Miranda (Act I)

BURR. Wait for it.

CHORUS I. Wait for it.

CHORUS II. Wait for it.

CHORUS III. Wait for it.

BURR. I am the one thing in life I can control!

ADDITIONAL READING

Mike Bartlett

- [Cock](#)
- [King Charles III](#)

Lin-Manuel Miranda

- Lin-Manuel Miranda, [Hamilton: The Revolution](#) (Collected lyrics)
- [“The World Was Wide Enough”](#)

Sarah Ruhl

- [Eurydice](#)

Emily C. A. Snyder

- [Cupid and Psyche "Bad Quarto" and "First Folio" Script](#)
- [The Other, Other Woman](#) on New Play Exchange
- [The Table Round and The Siege Perilous](#) on New Play Exchange

William Shakespeare

- [Folger: Shakespeare Texts Online](#)
- [MIT: Shakespeare Texts Online](#)
- William Shakespeare, [Hamlet](#)
- William Shakespeare, [King John](#)

Travis Wall

- [“Turn to Stone”](#)
- [“How It Ends”](#)
- [“Fix You”](#)

Thornton Wilder

- [Our Town](#)

That Shakespeare Life

- [Podcast](#)

