

## The Function of Absent Presence and Offstage Space in Susan Glaspell's "Trifles"

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### **Abstract**

Numerous dramatic characters enormously appeal to us on account of the fact that they are powerfully present on the stage. Nevertheless, there exist characters who do not physically appear on stage, yet their "absent presence" is so strong that affects the characters who do appear physically on stage. William Gruber in his book "Offstage Space, Narrative, and the Theatre of Imagination" suggests that the "absent presence" of the main characters who live in "offstage space" opens up new possibilities for the playwrights. Examples of such plays can be found from classic canon to modern plays. The present study attempts to explore the "absent presence" in Susan Glaspell's "Trifles" and illustrate how the main character of the play, who does not appear on stage throughout the play, is pivotal to the action of the play and is created vividly in the imagination of readers/ audience and remains a strong character in dramatic literature.

**Keywords:** Susan Glaspell, Trifles, William Gruber, Absent Presence, Offstage Space, Dramatic Characters