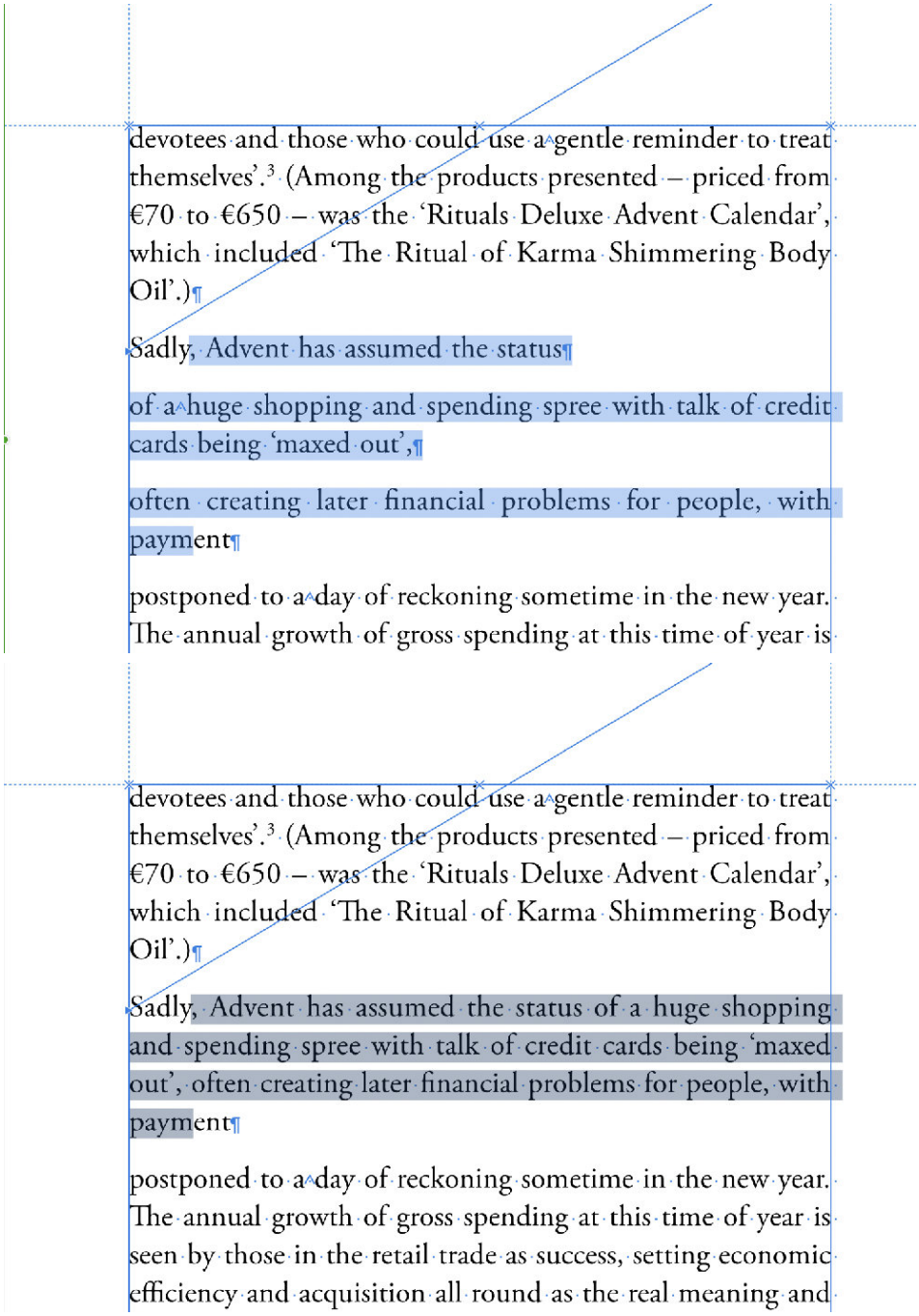
para-joiner

Joins selected paragraphs by replacing breaks with a single space.



Installation

1. Download the zip file and unzip it.
2. Run the script in one of two ways: **a) Run directly** — Open the Script Editor panel (**Window > Scripting > Script Editor**), paste the contents of `para-joiner.js` into the editor, and press **Run**. **b) Save to Script Library first** — Follow step (a) above, then click **Save As...** to save the script to the Script Library. Open the Script Library

panel (**Window > Scripting > Script Library**) and click the saved script once to run it.

Purpose

Joins the selected text range by replacing paragraph breaks, soft returns (Shift+Enter), and surrounding non-printing whitespace (regular spaces, tabs, NBSP, thin, hair, ideographic, etc.) with a single normal ASCII space. Runs of whitespace are collapsed to one space and punctuation at line ends (commas, full stops, etc.) is preserved — only spaces/tabs/NBSP-family are ever removed. Character styles and inline elements (custom fields, etc.) are preserved because only the affected glyphs themselves are touched. Paragraph style is left as-is (the merged paragraph natively retains the first paragraph's style; the pull-back line acquires the previous line's style), making the script generally applicable. No `<Style> Block` style is applied.

Works on both normal and master-derived text frames. On master-derived frames, a temporary character style is applied to the live selection to discover its range, then undone. Supports linked/threaded frames spanning spreads — a selection that spans linked frames across pages is joined as one paragraph with a single space (no forced break at the thread/overflow boundary); separate unlinked text boxes are not merged across stories.

How it works

The script first captures the live text selection — directly from `doc.selection` when available, or via a temporary character-style marker (applied with `doc.formatText`, then undone) when the selection sits in a master-derived frame where `doc.selection` reads empty. Hits are grouped by text flow (`textFrameInterface.textFlowNodes`) so a drag spanning linked frames across spreads coalesces to a single logical story range.

It then scans that range for hard paragraph breaks (`story.isParagraphBreak`) and real soft breaks (`glyph.isSoftBreak` with `!isCharGlyph`, since plain spaces also report `isSoftBreak`), expanding each break to swallow adjacent trimmable whitespace. Only non-printing whitespace is ever included — punctuation is explicitly guarded — and per-position `story.getText(pos, 1)` reads avoid the `U+2029` snapshot misalignment where bulk `getText(begin, count)` omits break characters. Each run is replaced `N→1` with a single space in one batched `CompoundCommandBuilder`, executed right-to-left, in a single undo step without moving you to another page.

Features

- **Break joining** — Hard paragraph breaks and real soft returns (Shift+Enter) become a single space
- **Whitespace normalisation** — Tabs, NBSP, thin/hair/ideographic spaces and multi-space runs collapse to one ASCII space
- **Punctuation safe** — Commas, full stops, `; : ! ? ' " - ( )` at line ends are never stripped

- **Character styles preserved** — Only break/whitespace glyphs are touched; character styles and inline objects survive
- **Paragraph style untouched** — Merged paragraph keeps the first paragraph's style natively; no `Block` style created
- **Cross-spread threaded support** — Linked frames across pages join as one continuous paragraph (`A1 A2 | B1 B2` → `A1 A2 B1 B2`)
- **Master-derived frames** — Style-marker capture with history-guarded undo
- **Single undo** — All replacements revert in one step
- **Silent** — No alerts; exits quietly when there is nothing to join
- **Stays on your page** — The viewport never moves as a result of the run

Usage tips

- Drag across the paragraphs to join (a bare caret is not enough — make an actual text range selection).
- Clicking a text frame without selecting text does nothing; drag across the text you want merged.
- For threaded stories, drag from the first frame into the linked frame across the spread — the whole span joins as one paragraph with single spaces, including the break at the thread boundary.
- A single plain space is left alone; only runs that would change (multi-space, tab, or NBSP-family) are normalised.
- Everything reverts in one undo step if the result surprises you.

Known limitations

- A text range selection is required — a bare cursor (insertion point) is not supported (exits silently, no alert).
- Paragraph style is left as-is; the merged paragraph retains the first paragraph's style natively. No `Block` style is created or applied.
- Only linked/threaded frames are supported for cross-spread selections; separate unthreaded text boxes cannot be selected together in Publisher and that case is not handled.
- No alerts are shown — if no break/space to normalize, the script exits silently (more generally applicable).
- Some zero-width characters (U+200B, U+200C, U+200D, U+2060, etc.) are not normalised to a visible space because doing so would insert a character where none existed. If you need them removed, that can be added separately. (U+FEFF is the exception — JavaScript's `\s` matches it, so it is treated as trimmable.)
- On master-derived frames, a bare cursor cannot be detected; make an actual text selection.

Changelog

1.3.14 - Fixed the spread switch on cross-spread/master-derived joins breaking the single-undo guarantee (now folded into the same compound, matching para-pairs.js); fixed a selection-capture edge case where genuinely separate (unthreaded) stories were silently merged into one nonsensical range instead of being treated as unsupported; removed dead multi-scope plumbing this made unreachable; removed a redundant punctuation guard and a self-contradicting whitespace helper; de-duplicated repeated node-walk and flow-matching passes; template literals throughout

1.3.13 - Marker-probe cleanup now guarded by history position, so a failed scan can no longer leave the temporary style on the text; extracted a shared dedupe helper; added `'use strict'`, named constants, and removed dead code

1.3.12 - Match linked frames by text-flow membership (textFrameInterface.textFlowNodes); Story objects expose no identity primitive, so story-identity grouping could never match across wrappers

1.3.11 - Size reduction; faster on large threaded selections

1.3.10 - Fix maxEnd truncation for distinct wrappers

1.3.9 - Fix second linked frame not joined

1.3.8 - Threaded-only, no alerts; coalesce distinct JS wrappers

1.3.7 - Cross-spread linked/threaded support

1.3.6 - Remove `<Style> Block` application

1.3.5 - Fix isSoftBreak mis-detection

1.3.4 - Robust whitespace handling for U+2029 omission

1.3.3 - Fix double-space and punctuation regression

1.3.2 - Bug fix: merging preserves commas and punctuation

1.3.1 - Performance: batched text replacements

1.3.0 - Non-standard space normalisation

1.2.0 - Soft returns handled alongside hard breaks

1.1.0 - Character styles and inline objects preserved

1.0.1 - Fix paragraph breaks now joined correctly

1.0.0 - Initial version; works on normal and master-derived frames