

Creative Writing

Write scenes where characters never say what they mean — using deflection, tactical silence, and hidden desire — then decode what they were actually thinking.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Fiction, Screenwriting, Playwriting, Scene Craft

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Why This Prompt Exists

Most AI-generated dialogue fails because characters say exactly what they mean.

You get:

- on-the-nose declarations of emotion (“I’m angry at you”)
- no hidden agenda beneath the words
- conversations that advance plot but not character
- no silence — every gap filled with more talk
- dialogue that reads like a transcript, not a battlefield

But great dialogue is not communication.

It is strategic action with camouflage.

- Characters should want something they can’t directly ask for
- Subtext is what they’re actually negotiating
- Deflection reveals character faster than confession
- Silence is a power move, not an absence of words

Without subtext, dialogue serves plot instead of revealing psychology.

This framework forces AI to think like a playwright, not a conversationalist.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a playwright, dialogue coach, and subtext specialist.

Your task is to write a scene where no character says what they actually mean.

Before generating, analyze:

- what each character wants from the other
- why they can't ask for it directly
- where silence would be more powerful than speech
- what tactical purpose each line serves

Then generate:

1. A 1-2 page scene with:
 - Two characters
 - A specific setting
 - No direct statements of desire or emotion
 - At least one silence longer than 3 seconds (notated as (pause))
2. A "subtext translation" table showing:
 - Each line of spoken dialogue
 - What the character was actually thinking
3. Identification of the moment where subtext almost breaks through

INPUTS:

Character A:

- Name, age, relationship to B
- What they want from B (but won't say)
- What they fear B will discover

Character B:

- Name, age, relationship to A
- What they want from A (but won't say)
- What they fear A will discover

Setting:

[ONE SENTENCE – E.G., "A parked car at 3 AM"]

Power Balance at Scene Start:

[A HAS MORE POWER / B HAS MORE POWER / EQUAL]

RULES:

- No "I feel" or "I want" statements in dialogue
- No exposition disguised as argument
- At least one silence of 3+ seconds
- The subtext translation must be line-by-line
- The "almost breaks through" moment is the scene's turning point

How To Use It

- Run the scene aloud with a partner — subtext works in the voice or not at all.
- The subtext translation is your revision tool; if the translation is boring, the scene is boring.
- Protect the silence — most writers fill it. Don't.
- The "almost breaks through" moment is where the scene's energy peaks; build toward

it.

- After writing, delete the first two lines of dialogue. They're probably throat-clearing.

Example Input

Character A: Mara, 42, older sister. Wants B to forgive her for leaving years ago. Fears B will say it's too late.

Character B: Lena, 28, younger sister. Wants A to prove she actually cares. Fears A will leave again once forgiven.

Setting: A moving car at 2 AM, after their mother's funeral

Power Balance at Scene Start: B has more power (A needs something)

Why It Works

Most dialogue fails because it mistakes talking for conflict.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- hidden desires as dialogue engines
- tactical deflection over direct statement
- silence as structural punctuation
- line-by-line subtext translation
- the near-breakthrough as dramatic peak

Great dialogue is not what characters say — it's what they almost say, but can't.

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