

Kim & Marshall

Hey there, someone read what's in purple:

This, along with the sheets you should get it with, is a pick up and play game about the semi-fictional relationship between Kim Scott Mathers and Marshall Mathers. You will need 3-4 players, about 15 tokens of one color (Persona points) and about 5 tokens of another color (Break tokens).

The game will teach you as you go along.

Have a different player read each role out loud. Afterward, decide amongst yourselves who will play what role. If there are three players, one plays Marshall, one plays Kim, and one plays the Pressure. If there are four players, two play the Pressure.

Everything in color is meant to be read aloud. Everything else is a silent instruction for the player it's addressed to.

Marshall

You are the real person behind Eminem. You know Eminem: Famous hip-hop artist. Actor. Woman hater, violence lover, drug addict. You don't know Marshall. Father, husband. You've just sold your first album, and everyone's talking about the white rapper so much you've bled from hip-hop to pop. Take a second. Find yourself.

Kim

You are Kim. You are you--in your husband's songs, in the news, behind closed doors. You are a woman from a poor white family in Detroit. You've been with Marshall, on and off, since you were a teenager. You have a daughter together, and now, a marriage. You will play to find the shape of that, and who you are found to be in it.

Pressure

You are friends, enemies, family. You are the things that make life a bitch. The things that money and fame and success can't protect against. You are the little miscommunications that sow seeds of sorrow, mistrust, anger, violence. You play to water those seeds, and grow them, and to make Kim and Marshall's struggles feel real and pressing.

After you've decided, a **Pressure player** reads this:

Ending before we begin: Kim and Marshall each have a box on their playsheet that says "End It" underneath. The game ends when either of their players decide to mark this box. They should make it clear to everyone that they are doing so.

Pressure players have two boxes on their playsheet. If each of them mark a box, the game is over. If only one does, and the other refuses, the mark is erased and play continues. Pressure cannot end the game if there is only one Pressure player.

Marshall's player: Take your playsheet and cards. You'll read aloud about each section of the sheet, so you and everyone else will understand what you do in this game. Pick up your Persona cards.

In this game the basic unit of play is the *scene*. We'll learn more about that later, but for now you need to know that I start every scene with one Persona active, with its card placed in the *Persona* section of the character sheet. When that Persona is active, I gain Persona points (represented by tokens) whenever I do any of the listed Persona actions. I'll take a moment to look over them and read them aloud. We'll see that different actions will earn me different amounts of points.

Marshall's player: pause and read the Persona cards.

It's up to the Pressure to judge when I have taken the actions and to award me the points. I can switch to a different Persona once per scene. I can't switch back to the Persona I started the scene with. Now, I'll cross one action off of each Persona card. They will not be present in this game. On each card, I can't cross off the action worth the most points. On the card where every action is worth 2 points, I can cross off any one of them.

Marshall's player: pause and cross off one action on each Persona card.

When I have Persona points, I can spend them within a scene on the following things:

- (1) Force a different player to revise a sentence or two they have just said.
- (2) I revise a sentence or two that another player has just said, however I see fit.
- (4) After a scene has been closed, declare that up to about half of it did not happen in the shared fiction we are creating. Be specific.
- (7) After a scene has been closed, declare that up to *all* of it did not happen in the shared fiction we are creating. Be specific.

Whenever I spend Persona points the Pressure will keep track, ongoing, of how many I spend. We'll come back to this later.

Pressure player(s): Whenever Marshall's player spends Persona, we write down what has been revised, or a summary of it, on the "What didn't happen" section of our playsheet. We write it in the negative. If it was revised out of the fiction, describe what was revised, but say that it *didn't* happen.

An example might be, "Kim didn't come into the room when Marshall was with Hailie," because Kim did do that, and then Marshall's player revised that out of the game. Or, "The car accident when Marshall was driving drunk didn't happen." Marshall getting drunk, driving down the road, and hitting someone head-on on the freeway might have taken about half of our scene. But when Marshall revised it, it didn't happen, and we write it as such here.

Kim: I can never record the things that Marshall revises, either on my sheet or anywhere else.

Marshall also has *Drives*, which are the things he cares about, the things that drive him. He starts the game with one Drive, *Love For Kim*, and two others of his player's creation. See the following list for examples you can pick from or use as inspiration to make your own.

Kim: show the list to the other players.

(List:

- Love for my daughter
- Self-Hatred
- Selfishness
- Need to succeed
- Victimhood
- Need for validation
- Addictions
- Immaturity
- Mommy issues
- Etc.)

Drives are Marshall's, but they are used in the game by me. Whenever I want Marshall to do or say something other than what his player has him do or say, I can Appeal to one of his Drives. To do this I check one of the boxes next to the Drive and have Kim appeal to this Drive in the fiction, like so: "C'mon baby, you love me, don't you? Stay here with me, don't go to that release party." Marshall then *must* give in to Kim's appeal, though his player has freedom to say how he does so.

Note that I can't make an Appeal if it doesn't make sense. If either Pressure player feels the Appeal has no context or logic, they have to say so, and the Appeal can't be made. Try a different way.

Marshall: Pick or create your last two Drives now.

Pressure: We will take a few minutes to make the first scene, and will play soon. Kim and Marshall's players can take a break if they want to, or skim over their instructions again to make sure they understand everything. They should at least read "**Basic Play**" [below] while we are making the first scene.

Pressure: Read the following out loud, with or without Kim and Marshall's players present.

Pressure: One of us will make the first scene, the other will make the second, and so on. If either of us wants to make more than one scene in a row, that's fine—we just

communicate what we're thinking to the other Pressure player and collaborate. We are partners, and hide nothing from each other.

If there is only one Pressure player, you get to make all of the scenes.

To make a scene, pick 1 Pressure and 1 Place. We may also pick 1-3 People (and Names for those People).

Decide if both Kim and Marshall will be in the scene, or only one of them.

For this first scene, some of the choices are made for us, so we can learn how to make a scene.

Pressure
Parenting

Place
Detroit Mansion

People
Your daughter (choose a Name)

Both Kim and Marshall will be in this scene.

It's now up to you to describe the scene to everyone. Embellish as much or as little as you want.

Example: "Kim and Marshall, you're at your Detroit mansion, with your daughter."

Ask questions using the "Questions" seed ideas on the Pressure sheet—how old is their daughter? Did they buy this house cash, or go into debt?

The most important and fun thing you get to do is to *discover the pressure* and apply it. Kim and Marshall are at home with their daughter. The pressure is "parenting". That's deliberately vague so you can use it however you want. How is "parenting" a pressure on one or both of Marshall and Kim in this scene? Does their daughter run out of the bedroom crying because she can't sleep? If she's older, has she just come home drunk after escaping from her room? Does she come to Marshall and say that mom won't let her go to her friend's house?

Decide whether you or the other Pressure player will act as the daughter in this first scene. When you make scenes, you get to decide who will act as the other people in the scene.

Both Pressure players also get to make up any events that may happen in the scene. In other words, you're not just restricted to acting as People in scenes—you can describe changes in the environment, or new people showing up halfway through, or whatever.

However, you can never speak for Kim or Marshall.

In a minute, you're going to play the first scene, describing things to Kim and Marshall's players, acting as the daughter, and having Kim and Marshall act as themselves.

Pressure players always decide when to end a scene. When one or both says the scene is over, it's over. "Cut", "That's it!", "...aaaand SCENE!"—However you want to express it, you *do* express it. When do you end a scene? When this happens:

There is no longer any pressure at play in the scene.

You've thrown pressure at them, and it's been dealt with or not. It may come back in a future scene, but once it's been confronted or ignored in this scene, that's it. Cut it.

It is not your responsibility to make scenes either long or short. Just focus on applying the pressure.

And that's all. That up there is the only rule for when to end scenes. A corollary is ***let the pressure play out before ending the scene***. You may have an instinct to cut scenes at a moment of high tension, and leave whatever action was to come as implied. That's a good dramatic instinct that is a *mistake* to apply when playing this game.

We have to see the pressures play out, so Kim has her chance to appeal to Marshall's Drives and Marshall as his chance to revise the fiction. Don't end a scene on the cusp of a fight, end it right after the fight is over.

One last, important thing: As it says in the scene-maker, *Follow Up*. This means that when making your next scene, think about what happened in the previous one (remember that things that have been revised by Marshall *have not happened*, unless Kim can change that with an Appeal). Write short notes under *Follow Up* for things that might impact future scenes and/or be seen again. Bring them into your scene as it makes sense to you, to help apply the pressure—they don't have to be immediately followed up on, and some threads may die entirely. That's OK.

Continue to use the scene maker to make your second, then third, then fourth scenes, etc. There is space to write in more Pressures, People, Places, and Names if you think of them.

Pressure: now invite everyone back to the table and play the first scene

Kim's Player: After the first scene has ended, read this:

In addition to how **Appealing to Marshall** works, there is one more element. Whenever I Appeal to a Drive with a reference to fiction that has already been created in the game, I roll a die.

If it comes up less than the number of times I have Appealed to that Drive, then I do not mark that Drive this time, and Marshall is not bound to Kim's Appeal. However, Marshall may not dispute Kim's version of events.

If the past that Kim references includes fiction that has been revised, however I remember it is now the accepted truth. I write how it happened on my sheet. If this contradicts Marshall's memory (as shown on the Pressure's sheet under "What didn't happen"), he crosses out the sentence(s) that are contradicted. They are no longer true.

If the roll comes up greater than or equal to the number of times Kim has Appealed, I check one of the boxes next to the Drive and Marshall goes along with the Appeal as normal. However, Marshall does not have to accept my version of events and repeats his version. Kim must then accept the version Marshall repeats. Kim now writes this down on her sheet, under "What happened." She may no longer dispute this version of events.

Marshall: I can negate Kim's Appeal to Marshall's Drive by crossing it off my playsheet. This means, in the fiction, that whatever I crossed off is something that Marshall is renouncing as a driving force in his life. For example, if I cross off the Drive, "Love For Kim," something has drastically changed in Marshall and his relationship with Kim. As I act as Marshall in the game, I play this out—what has led him to this point? What does he do to show this change?

I can only negate Kim's Appeal by crossing off a Drive *when* Kim is Appealing to that Drive. A Drive negated in this way must have already been Appealed to at least one time previous to the current Appeal.

I may then write in a new Drive, related to the loss of the old one or simply bringing in something completely new. It starts with no boxes checked.

Everyone: Play another scene.
(Interstitials—Pressure players)

After the second scene, Pressure Players read:

We will track how many Persona points that Marshall spends. For every 5th point that Marshall spends, we take a Break token. If Marshall spends over the 5th point required in the current scene, do not track these. Reset the point counter at the beginning of the following scene.

Spending Break tokens allows us to make a Break scene. Kim and Marshall aren't in Break scenes.

Break scenes are for Pressure players to get some action of our own. We say or act out as normal a short scene that's about one of two things:

Reaction Set Up

Instead of picking a Pressure, for Break scenes, we pick one of the above purposes for the scene.

Break scenes don't interrupt normal scenes, but rather follow them in the usual way. Pressure players must spend a Break token to set a Break scene. Pressure players are not obligated to spend Break tokens.

Pressure players: Read or skim the following to yourselves, now or later, if you feel you need some more explanation of the above two scene options.

Otherwise, We will continue to play the game until it has ended. If we take a break while playing, it may be helpful for the Pressure players to read "Basic Play" and "A Few More Notes" and for Kim and Marshall's players to read "Basic Play", both found below.

Choose *Reaction* when you as players (or one of the characters who have come to life in play) have something to say about what Marshall and Kim have been doing up to this point. It could be characters literally reacting, discussing and commenting on events of play. It could show consequences that follow on what Marshall and Kim have done, but that they would not normally be privy to. It could be a metaphor for what we've sent that comments on it: Their daughter playing "house" with her friends, acting out her role as mommy and daddy act out theirs.

In all cases, it's a callback and reflection on things that have come before in the fiction. It's also a time for Kim and Marshall to catch their breath, and time for the fiction to hit a low-energy beat.

Choose *Set Up* when you want to foreshadow changes in Kim and Marshall's circumstances or lay fictional groundwork for a host of new Pressures—an album release, parents being foreclosed on, an offer for an acting gig, a death in the family, etc. Whereas Reaction is looking back thoughtfully, Set Up is looking forward with the intention of putting the screws to Kim and Marshall. That said, Set Up is also an opportunity to take the attention away from Kim and Marshall's relationship to focus on the wider picture that they exist in.

Basic Play - to be read by Kim and Marshall while the Pressure players are setting up their first scene, and/or read on a break.

Within scenes, play is free and fluid, and there are two rules in addition to the ones already described:

1. Whatever you describe your character saying or doing, they say or do. For Pressure players, this extends to any aspect of the scene (though they may not speak for Kim or Marshall).
2. You may describe your character forcing another character to do something, or to have something happen to them, such as being harmed. Whether that character goes along with it or has it happen to them is up to their player, always.

And one last rule: Both of these rules can, of course, be overridden by an Appeal or the spending of Persona points.

A Few More Notes:

Remember to *never* write things that get revised out of the game by Marshall under *Follow Up*. You have a place to write those things, and part of the benefit of Marshall revising things is so they don't come back to bite him in the ass. If you ignore this rule, you are playing it wrong and cheating!

However, this also means that when something goes unrevised, seize on it! Use it as strongly as you can to put pressure on Kim and Marshall.