

uptalk

♡ kimmy walters ♡



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INDICATIONS THAT I MAY BE CURSED

when I see a photograph with a blurry spot
I instinctively think "that is where I used to be"

in all my dreams
I see myself sleeping

when I wake up
my bed has moved several inches

HUNDREDS

my favorite kind of music is the
kind that sounds like something with
a lot of legs is stuck inside a piano

and I feel like when I speak a sentence
the words do not come in sequence

they all spring out of
different parts of my body simultaneously
trailing paper tails

I need to concentrate
you can sit with me while I
paint my nails gold if you want

but only speak if it is to tell me
that this color makes me look
like a king or maybe

a wealthy animal

JENNY HOLZER WRITES ON YOUR BODY IN BLACK MARKER WHEN YOU'RE PASSED OUT DRUNK

do "girl parts" and "lady parts" refer
to the same thing
because I feel like I have neither

that's plain intuition
and I have so much

MACHINE

I'll fold my mouth into a
möbius strip
so that the moment you kiss me
I have technically eaten you

I think we can all agree that
the best way to eat someone is *technically*

I looked up *calliope* yesterday and here is what I learned:
there was a woman who was clever and had a sweet voice
and now there is a singing machine named after her
it is made of pipes and water vapor

a dead woman is a thought bubble
with the curve of breast and hip dominating her shape
and hands that build machines find her
and assume she is a machine

and what else is left but to build her

it's true

there are girl machines everywhere
singing and moving and doing things *technically*

and if a girl must do things *technically*
she might as well eat as much as she can

I WOULD LIKE A CATALOG OF ALL THE TIMES

I would like a catalog of all the times
someone has passed me by and didn't
immediately recognize my shape as human

I would look through it for comfort

I would place orders from
specific pages like people used to do
when they needed hair dryers and things

yes, I would like to place an order
for the time someone thought I was
a pile of firewood
until I stood up in my body

I would like 500 of them
and I would like to wear them all at once

and when I stand up I want
500 simultaneous moments of recognition
like a safe dropped into a lake

I want it to be enough
to kill a person

I LICKED YOUR METAL TOOTH AND NOW I'M PART METAL TOO

later I'll send you some pictures of me with
unfamiliar hair and dark eyes

I'll record a video of myself singing
be my baby by the ronettes
and loop a quarter second of it
so it looks and sounds like I will break soon

you know when people are
working with hazardous material?

and they have to stand behind a piece of plexiglass and
stick their arms through it

into those long rubber sleeves?

I want my whole body to feel like that

DO YOU LIKE ME CIRCLE ONE YES NO

after I take a shower I want to pack
all of the steam in the bathroom into a ball
and feed it to you

shhh, I'm trying to be romantic

but I don't know how
no, I've never seen a movie before

COMING HOME AFTER STEALING SOMETHING

you pull off your gloves and they make that
canned whip-strike sound from the movies

you throw them against the wall and they hit with a
heavy smack

and leave hand outlines on the wall like the wall is a
cheek

you stand on your nice blue sheets
on the edge of your mattress with your legs apart
and think about videos of hot things being dropped into
blocks of ice

you think about someone finding a body-shaped hole in a
block of ice

and a gush of body-shaped steam rushing out

you think about someone looking into the hole
and finding nothing, not even the bottom of it

SPANISH

you can only be told how
eloquently you express grief so many times
before you start to feel like a pain farm

the solution is to learn another language
and speak it like a child forever

show me any language and I will
confuse the words for desk and writer
to protect myself

I remember
our high school spanish teacher
put on a movie
and held up a piece of large red paper
to block the screen when someone was
dying or having sex

I remember the paper was translucent
so we all saw gertrudis and the soldier
fucking redly on horseback

if anything could've made me fluent in spanish,
that was it
the same way cutting onions makes you cry

like a little child forever ever ever

MY FACE

I am inside a huge bus with my huge face
and they are traveling at exactly the same speed

I am proving this to god by pushing my face
against the second story windshield

my mother made me promise not to do this

my mother made me promise
not to get decapitated by an overpass

my mother made me promise
not to get decapitated by anything

because my face is huge and valuable

I can travel away from anyone at the
speed of my face

I can get what I deserve

RAPUNZEL

I spill my hair out from my tower
like a pot of boiling oil

I'm in my room
eating candy and
wearing a moat like a hula hoop
go away

BLOODY MARY

you turn off the light in the bathroom
and close the door

you look into the mirror and say
your own name three times

you wait
nothing happens

you open the medicine cabinet and
check that the pill bottle still
says "side effects:
loss of vocabulary"

you put it in the thing
next to the thing and
get into bed and lie still

very still

momentarily, you forget
the meaning of "blanket" and assume

french, masculine.
a small blankness.

PARADE

everywhere people are complaining
about the temperature of their bodies

I know the feeling
and I know the smell of tar

I drank one plastic cup of sangria
and I lost the ability to react appropriately

I lost it and the ground discovered it
and a deep rumbling took place there

it was the appropriate reaction and
everyone knew it

so they deeply rumbled too
they rumbled and laughed and said *hahaha*

this heat is turning us into something else

NAKED IN THE DARK

here is the part of my body
that acquires indentations shaped like bark
when you climb trees

here is the part of my body
that acquires indentations shaped like strawberry seeds
when you eat fruit

here is the part of my body
that whitens when you show your teeth

here, here, here, and here:

the part of my body
that quietly fills with hair

the part of my body
that quietly fills with noise

the part of my body
that drowns sailors

the part of my body
that leaves at night
and comes back in the morning

TINY NATURE

when cars pass outside a
tuxedo of light moves over me

I don't understand where
on my body to keep these feelings

I might grow a new tooth
for each of them

and afterwards
tie them to the doorknob
with red string

and have someone
pull the door closed

I showed you my
tiny nature

you animal

I'd like to shove your mouth
full of my teeth

LETTER HOME

yesterday I crossed at the crosswalk
and got hit by an ambulance

today I crossed at the crosswalk
and got hit by a hospital

it is so exciting here

I met a man with a tattoo of a man
and we have fallen in love

it's been hours
or years
or something

and I'm very sorry
but we keep having children
and we keep naming them

they have wild little heads
you should see how they cry

and cry and cry and cry

I put them to bed while ambulances howl for me
and then I touch their heads until morning

when I look in the mirror I find myself bleeding
from the nose and the chest and the legs

anything can cut through anything else
if it's moving fast enough

you learn these things
when you live in a city

A SEMICOLON IS FORMED WHEN YOU SPLICE A COMMA'S GENES

yes, I butcher english
here is a tender cut

once, a man told me he was proud of me because I
discovered a minimal pair for
voicing in interdental fricatives that he had forgotten

either ether either ether either ether

when you lie on your side and repeat this to yourself your
tongue behaves like a
snake's when it is tasting the air

RINGS

my thoughts are like two people
having the same thoughts simultaneously

it is difficult to explain
like water

difficult exactly
like a chest full of water
that needs to be moved

I looked into a chest
and the lid closed on my ring finger
and now there is something blue and gold and painful
there

yes, I have agreed
to marry the act of closing

and our relationship is very beautiful
like water

I don't need you to understand,
not really

there is always closing
and there is always me

BEDTIME STORY

tell me the story again
where you used to know a girl
who had little bugs burrow
into her skin

and she put clear nail polish over
the holes to suffocate them
and how one time she ran out of clear
and used gold and blue

it is so natural to me
I have been suffocating animals
inside my body for years

animals come to me
requesting to be suffocated
because I am good at what I do and I love them

tell it again
it is so natural

tell it again
I sleep for days

I LIKE WHEN THE COFFEE MACHINE

I like when the coffee machine
requests water because
water and electricity are
the only informations it knows

it is otherwise blind and
yes of course I will give you
informations you poor blind thing
yes of course

I pour the water
I make the eggs
I navigate the plate with forks and knives

I do an intimate thing
like learn your middle name

I learn your middle name
first thing every morning

it is an information that lasts me the day

OH

you have to go and oh
I will be thinking of you
and listening of you
and placing my hand flatly against objects of you

and don't go
I can at least promise to love you
during the moments my belly is called a belly
instead of something else

I will never own a home and neither will you
so why don't we not own a home together

we'll live in something that doesn't belong to us
it doesn't matter what

because we'll make it full of objects

an object is what comes
out of space when you injure it
and oh I will teach you how

I AM A SIMPLE GIRL AND

I have simple wishes
I just want someone
to gently slam dunk me into bed

and I hope nobody gives me a jewel
because I will have to keep it
and that makes me sick

DIFFICULT BABY

look at this picture of me as a baby
I look exactly the same now
just more difficult

for the sake of accuracy, they should
call puberty the difficulting
but they don't want it to sound like
a horror movie

because then nobody would do it
we all know how horror movies end
if you're still alive, your hair is full of twigs and shit

and the killer is just out of frame
breathing down the frame's
very straight neck

years ago, my sister told me about
a horror movie she couldn't
remember the name of
so she called it *the somethinging*

and every part of my body
reached out to claim
that name for itself

I HAVE YET TO ENCOUNTER AN ACCURATE DEPICTION OF LOVE

I smile for 30 seconds thinking
I should tell you how I wish
more hairstyles were named for
which animal they make your head look like

VESTMENTS

what could make you believe in god
you say while removing many socks
and tossing them in separate directions

you know how I feel
god is just so human

so I only want a
happenstance

such as if
I am flailing wildly around your room
and my movements coincide with your socks

and they all end up on my feet

a person is the worst thing
in this world

but me in the socks is beautiful
and I walk around

when a happenstance collects size I touch it
because it is inhuman and
considerable

look at me go

SHORT-HAIRED GIRLS

I am growing my hair long
so I can put my fingers through
it and pull

it has been growing
for two months when you
tell me you prefer short-
haired girls
well I'm

going to stand in
front of one of those
industrial fans

and it's going to make wind that
whips new hair out of my head
in feet at a time
like thread unrolling from a
spool pushed across the floor

my hair will be rope looped
from elbow to palm thirteen times
and I'm going to use it

to catch you someone
else

I THINK ABOUT HURTING YOU

I think about sharpening the air in
your room at night
so you can't dream

I think about dismembering your name
and burying it letter by letter
until all that's left is a fresh white suck of breath

I think about carving your face
into a block of salt
and waiting for the deer to come

I think about whether or not I am good
I blink once and everything everywhere
replaces itself with something identical

GENIUS

something about the word *woman*
is too sexual for me

I am a king girl instead

I can drink a whole thing of dr. pepper
and hate it but I love the way
dr. pepper sounds so I do it anyway

I'm a king
and I do ornamental things

I sparkle like an expanse of sand

ten thousand years from now
someone will find the way I pronounce *syrup*
preserved in amber
and that person will want to eat it
because it just looks so good

I recommend selling it instead

I'm wearing a bow
and I have dr. pepper flavored lip gloss
from the eighth grade
I wonder

I wonder how a girl's self-esteem ever
reaches equilibrium without
roughly equal numbers of people telling her
that she's a genius/idiot

I recommend selling everything

K

amnesia is rampant in daytime
television

a man forgets his name and must
give himself a new one

he chooses one initial
with the expectation that it will
lengthen when he excites it

but not all things are like that

just most of them

I shared my name with this girl
I say this as if either of us had a choice
I say this in the past tense because she has died
which is a place where your name forgets you

and it is painful
because our name has this deficit
that it allows into my hands
ruining them

even though I show it babies

even though I show it columns of air
that won't age

it refuses to own them
or anything

and I can't keep holding this

it is enough to make me choose one initial

or to choose nothing
so there is no danger of it lengthening

SUCH A THING

I tried to wear eyeshadow once but the dust kept falling
into the creases under my eyes and I looked punched in
the face

the house was completely quiet and I
was alone and I felt punched in the face

when I am sleeping in one half of my bed I imagine
you sleeping in one half of your bed

with your music on, your tv on, busy things in your room
with static electricity in your hair

with a ribbon of closed captioning nudging its way out of
your television
and winding around your neck like a scarf

TO KEEP A WITCH IN

all you need to make an eclipse
is a round thing and a bright thing

you may have noticed that
most of your body parts
match those descriptions

you'd pick yourself out of a police lineup
with those descriptions

here is what I know:
to keep a witch out, you make
a circle around yourself

to keep a witch in, you make
a circle around everything else

which of those
most accurately describes your body?

quickly
you need to
tell me the truth

UPTALK

as an adult in the future
I have seen a record number of images

but

just once I want to see a girls' magazine with articles like
"what if you found out that you time travel for the
duration of your orgasms"

or

"how to speak sentences like they're knives into very soft
things"

HOW TO CALL THE COPS

how to call the cops on the man
downing schlaflys in his buick at the red light

how to wonder if this is the same cop
that didn't believe you

how to understand that a cop
has received birthday presents before,
maybe dozens

how to imagine a cop
shooting a birthday cake with a gun

how to imagine a cop being born
in a buick at a red light

how to be called *honey*

how to be called *calm down*

how to pluralize *schlafly*

CAKE

starting now I'm only printing my résumé with edible ink
and only onto big cakes
and if you don't give me an interview
a woman is going to come out of the cake
like happens at parties for rich,
stupid, hungry men on television

then more women
with sharp parts and laughing eyes
will come out of the cake
and then more and more
until you are scared and run outside
to call the police or the media
or your mom

anyway
that's when we rob you

I DON'T BELIEVE IN NUDITY

I don't believe in nudity
when I take my shirt off
there is nothing there

or there is a pale gray and white
checkerboard pattern

or you go blind

or you go deaf

I'll let you choose
I'll always let you choose

LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP

I lay my compact mirror open
mirror side up on my crotch
and when I breathe in and out
a bright circle moves on the ceiling

LICK MY TIME ZONE

I'm telling you, sunset occurs at different times on
the eastern and western
edges of a time zone

do you understand?
here, pretend my face is a time zone
and my hand is a sun

it's six pm on my whole face
and my hand takes time to cross
from one cheek to the other

it doesn't really matter
just know I fantasize about having you
somewhere inside my time zone

I have plans

I will call you and say
it's six pm
and you will agree and I will shiver

PROTAGONIST

I looked good and
david looked at me and said *fit for a king*

does this mean I am fit to become a king
or fit to be consumed by one

I always forget to err
on the side of being consumed

yes, I know I am dumb

I peeled off my sunburn and I didn't
know what to do with it
I wanted to feed it to an animal
but I couldn't find one
so I put it in a thick book
and closed it forever

I remember overhearing a woman
say yes, we got a sunburn
like they both got the same sunburn
like they crawled into a tent of it together

if there is a tent somewhere
I can destroy it

I am confident that I can
because this story is about me

THE BAD NEWS

do you ever eat something and think

what have I done

or

how many calories does it take

to maintain a scar

for the length of one human life

what about for the length of two

what about for the length of ten

ABOUT HOW

when you pour water into a cup
you are teaching the water what shape it is
when you cup my face into your hands
you are teaching it too

so pay attention

I'm out here asking the important questions:

has a blind man ever mistaken
a ghost for a dress form?

are the cars on this four-lane highway giving a secret
friendship bracelet tutorial in the way they change
lanes?

I'm learning a lot about how to estimate
small to medium distances
with a small to medium degree of accuracy

I'm learning a lot about
the texture of cold air

POINT OF NO

we hated smoke at first

there was so much of it everywhere

then, twice as much of it was gone as was ever there

we tried to recreate smoke with bits of fur we found

we shaped the fur

we forgot the shape of smoke

we examined the fur

we thought,

*does this look like smoke because it looks like smoke
or because of another reason?*

I have this face because I found the opposite of this face

I found the concavity of this face, and I pushed in

to the point of no return

I pushed in to the point of no

does this look like my face because it looks like my face
or because of another reason?

NONSPECIFIC WHITE MATTER

I casually remember your face
in a sex museum
and think about the results of my MRI

a polaroid slowly shoved through my head
and my skull accumulating shape
very nicely
like a professional

and me thinking can they see me
thinking about lips during the scan

and can they see me thinking about
whether or not they can see me
thinking about lips

and if I am thinking about obvious shapes
inside my obvious skull

if I am inside
of an obvious museum
touching fruit

can you see me

AMPERSAND

I put my hands in the sink

I'm fussing with myself
so we can go out

I'm trying to make my hair look like an ampersand
in one of those fonts that people use on their
wedding invitations

do you understand what "ampersand" really means?

it means “and, which means 'and'”

which means *and*

SMILE AND WAVE

I saw a mirror and I didn't know what to do
so I showed it another mirror

in my dream
I couldn't remember *stained glass*

I came up with
embalmed window

and everyone told me I was very beautiful
and smart

I practiced smiling just in case
I won a contest for touching things correctly

EXCERPT FROM MY LIST OF DEMANDS

delete useless spreadsheets
right in front of my face

show me images of fancy breads and cakes

help me decide whether I
love or hate the phrase
“lump sum”

I AM TELLING YOU THIS IN CONFIDENCE

ilya is russian? I thought he was french
I thought he was named *il y a*
stop laughing, I am telling you this in confidence

I think my name has something to do with wood
as in: I am wooded

as in: spacious and obstacled

and you,
when you come to my name,
are obstacled too
with clothing and dark

like a bedroom

I can prove it
see
your eyes are becoming bedroommy
right this instant

your entire body
is becoming bedroommy

WHERE I'M JUST READING

I was having that dream again
where I'm just reading the description of a dream

everything I do lately feels like a document

eating

getting dressed

experiencing pain

I don't want to go anywhere
but I'm already on the train

I pinned my two most important
questions to my shirt in case I forget:

is there a religion
that allows me to hurt you

is there a language
that allows me to do it accidentally

OTHER WAYS TO HAVE SEX

think about touching a clean piece of velvet

think about the small actions required to control a pencil

think about the story you overheard where a woman was catching her daughter's vomit with one hand and driving a car with the other

pee in a glass jar

pee in two glass jars

throw a suitcase full of money into the ocean
with your eyes closed

hehe

ROLEPLAY

1.

I am a glass of water
and you are deep, heavy footsteps in the distance

2.

I am the fear
and you are the child

GLOSSARY OF FASHION MOVES

the category "life events involving a person
laughing after stealing blueprints"
contains two items
in my case

you can make me sound like a bandit
if you know exactly how to tell it

I wish I still had my pink phone because
if I'm going to be a bandit I want to be
the kind of bandit who owns a pink phone

I had one but I dropped it into
a pitcher of beer last year

the screen turned white
and it called my parents

you can make me sound like a drunk
if you want
it's fine

I partake in things

pink drinks
soft cloth
bathrooms completely
full of porcelain dolls

it's fine

I occupy a specific amount of space in this world

I drive my car

one song only comes
on the radio when I am
actively bleeding through my clothing

you can make me sound
like a witch

HELLO AND WELCOME TO FROM NOW ON

I can't meet your parents
so we're sending them a photo of me

we choose a photo
of me learning the word *microfiche*

they think I'm learning
the word *microfiche* constantly

and they love me now
it was so easy

you and me do the thing
where you wake up and draw your dream

and I interpret it
I explain

these are two dogs
and they are going to kiss furiously
in the walk-in freezer

so, so easy

WHAT KIND OF BABY

if you give my niece one whole cookie
she will cry

if you split it and place half in
each of her hands she is happy

this is not a metaphor
she is too young to know how to be a metaphor
thank god

my sisters are powerful
they assign me the name *aunt* just by having a baby

it's just that I don't like *aunt* -

I want to know what kind of baby
they would have to have
to assign me a name like *sasha*

maybe a floral baby

maybe a hushing baby

I don't doubt their ability, no,
I am just waiting

I know I will receive half a name in each hand

ACCENT

there was a gunshot one night
and the bullet was never recovered

because I took it into my mouth
and told everyone it was a diacritical mark
the next time I spoke

I told everyone
I was so french

I'm so sorry

I'm so consistently from
here

ANATOMICAL STUDY

I have a facial feature called *bad lighting*
it is my best facial feature because it leaves constantly

BITE GESTURE

when I think about things that can
make me happy I think about things that can
make me forget how to speak

then I arrange them in order of
length of forgetment

the shortest forgetment is sexual and obvious

like um, the perfect weight of liquid in a mouth
and a carbonated mask

do you feel me

I tried to explain to a girl
who didn't speak english
why she shouldn't
hand-feed raccoons

I did the bite gesture and I did the
bitten gesture

and I did rabies gestures one through four

and she just laughed a little

because I can't be fluent

it's okay

I went straight to the library
to design a
hand-feed gesture and

decide who to use it on

WHAT'S THE PASSWORD

I am so painful

mail me a recording of a backrub
and I will put it on my back

don't accuse me of being ignorant
of what is and isn't possible

I'll go into the café and fill
my mouth with wifi and come out
and spit it in your face

CONFESSION

my friend jordan had
a belly dance themed sleepover birthday party in the
fourth grade and I stayed up all night
imagining eating a feather boa

in the morning we took the camcorder
and filmed each other sprinting circles around her
basement
we took our shirts off to be
aerodynamic

I tell you this story

I hear a bird

I catch you with pictures of
girls looking directly into the camera

everything I have is exactly the same

SITTING STILL FOR COMPLICATED HAIRSTYLES

when I was a gymnast they taught us to elegantly posture
our hands

by pretending to hold invisible tea sandwiches
between each thumb and middle finger

I guess I am not elegant because
if I had even one invisible sandwich
I would eat that thing so fast

I felt masculine then especially
while falling

and I still thought
I could outthink puberty and drunkenness
in the same way I still think
I could understand semaphore if I were in sufficient
duress

if you're curious,
I have only been in insufficient duress

but someone told me that I posture
my hands in my sleep

it's like I know something

I WITHDRAW FIVE DOLLARS

I withdraw five dollars
from the bank to feel powerful

I am ready to fight you
in the department of motor vehicles

because I hate the way
every hair leaves your face like it's
graphing something

give me your damn informations
I'm hungry and I have no idea
what I look like

and I really want to

are you hiding my data in one of
your bodily areas

I know you have at least two

OUR LADY OF UNEXPLAINABLE NOISES

I saw the mouse right before I went to sleep
dreamed I woke up and the mouse had given
birth in all of my shoes
now I am too tired to even think of my enemy
maybe I could've psychically
blocked him out of his shoes if I'd had the energy
today would've been the day
yes,
yes, I am sure he is my enemy
because I can't remember what he
looks like unless I'm holding a knife
why would I confront my anger
why would I confront a wall
when I have pictures to hang on it

IT'S RAINING

you go to the window and say *it's raining*

I say what is?

you make a huge movement

toward the window

and say everything is

and just like that, everything is

everything is, at slightly different speeds

it's like how my little niece only realized

what wind was after she grew hair to feel it with

I want to discover something like wind

but different

so I'm growing something like hair

but different

I'm patient

I'm raining slowly

you have to remember

I once took a pregnancy test

after missing my period

for ten months

after not having sex

for a year

so

you know

I believe in things

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