

## first, best

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by [violet\\_pencil](#)

### Summary

Reasoning from first principles.

### Notes

Written for ao3 user Arwen88 for the 2022 Star Trek Day flash exchange.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Dawn on a new world; the Vulcan homeworld, but not Vulcan. A fitting place for a Jim Kirk who's not Jim Kirk... or at least not the Jim Kirk he should be.

Jim sighs. This is a familiar train of thought. He rises from the low bed, pulling away from his sleeping companion before the shadow of his dark thoughts can fall over the older man, too.

He walks to the balcony, parts the thin curtains and steps out into the dawn light, a slightly warm breeze brushing over his bare shoulders.

All right. Work it out from first principles. Who is he, what is he doing here? Is he an old man's folly? A stand-in for the real thing? Hard not to wonder, right?

Query: is Spock shallow? Stupid? No. Do touch-telepaths tend to be fooled by outward appearances, coincidental resemblances? No. (It's funny how now that he's been with a Vulcan he understands why they don't care so much about names. *He* knows who he means when he says Spock, whichever one he's talking to or about. First, last, middle, who needs the hassle when every mind has its own signature, when every touch is unique, every brush of minds an introduction to a new world?)

Jim presses his hands against the smooth speckled stone railing of the balcony, letting the warmth sink into his hands. Query: Is past experience always a perfect guide to future outcomes? Before Spock, he was always reaching, always grasping. Kiss me, hit me, yell at me, chase me, help me, *see* me— always something missing, something lost—

Now, is that because his life was wrenched off its destined path by genocidal time-travelling Romulans at the very moment of his birth, or do a lot of people feel like that?

Jim has the sneaking suspicion that a lot of people feel like that.

The faint sound of the curtain trailing across the floor alerts him: Spock is awake, a thin robe thrown over his wiry body. He rests one strong hand gentle and unafraid on Jim's bare shoulder. Jim closes his eyes. He can't help but smile.

Listen to what I am trying to tell you, Spock says. (He doesn't use words to say it.)

"Why is it that knowing your thought-patterns are illogical doesn't actually help?" Jim says. He turns, and presses his mouth to the edge of Spock's jaw. Spock draws him close, breathing dry air across his throat.

Sharing thoughts is one thing, sharing feelings is a real mindfuck. Still, sometimes Jim needs words.

"You proceed from a false assumption," Spock says aloud. "Yes. He was great in a way that very few men are great. It is a way that involves

much self-reflection and self-doubt, at times. He was singular, although it was rare for him to acknowledge it. But he was."

Jim takes a deep, deep breath, and opens his eyes.

"Jim," Spock says, very gently. "So are you."

"I won't presume to debate you," Jim says, and gets one of those rare flashes. An overloaded touch-telepath, hand cupping his jaw, mind flaring with some strong emotion, or maybe all of them at once. Surprise and sorrow, regret and joy, the uniquely Vulcan glory in perceiving the Other— all of these, pinned in their place like stars in the dark, burning plasma-bright. Beautiful. Jim could spend a life warping towards them and never tire. There's so much to learn!

"Ah, the beginnings of wisdom," Spock says dryly.

Jim can't *believe* he used to think Vulcans didn't have a sense of humor. "What are we doing out here?" he says. "Aren't you cold? Take me to bed. Touch my mind, tell me your name. You know I like that."

"I do," Spock says, "yes. And tell me yours, Jim. For it is a new frontier to me, a brand new world... and you know I delight to hear it."

## End Notes

"You once said being a starship captain was my first, best destiny... if that's true, then yours is to be by my side." — Kirk Prime, in a message to Spock, in a deleted scene from Star Trek (2009).

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