

A Name That In My Thoughts Becomes Me Best

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A Name That In My Thoughts Becomes Me Best

by [Adinskel](#)

Summary

Choosing your name is powerful. A new name can feel like an entirely new identity. So what better way to run from your past than to choose a new name?

Jimmy, JT, Tiberius, and Jim are all different people, or at least, that's what James T Kirk believes. It's easier that way.

Notes

Tarsus IV is my emotional support trauma. When I was living with limited access to food, I "coped" by reading through most of the Tarsus fics on here, and I still come back and reread more often than I would like to admit. I think it's a right shame that the Star Trek franchise has so glossed over this part of Jim's backstory.

Let me tell you from the get-go, though, this fic is not going to be significantly different than the pre-existing fics. There really isn't much lore for me to pull from outside of apocrypha, and I like the fanon that has been established. This is basically just me self-indulgently pulling all of my favorite Tarsus tropes into one fic. I'll try to cite where I get specific ideas from if I know the source, and I highly recommend checking out any fics I link in the author's notes.

Prologue

It wasn't often one got the chance to start over, but James Kirk now found himself with exactly that opportunity. No one at New Anchorage Academy knew him, or even thought they knew him. And once his time here was up, he'd never see any of them again. He didn't have to be the Jimmy everyone knew back home; he could be whoever the fuck he wanted to be. Getting himself sent to what was essentially space juvie may have been the best decision of his life.

He opened the door to his dorm room to see his roommate—according to the papers he had received, one Thomas Leighton—hastily cleaning up the left side of the room.

“Shit, sorry, didn't think you would get here so soon. I mean, that's a lie, they told me you'd get here today, but I miscalculated how long it would take me to move everything. I'll be out of your way in just a moment, I swear.”

“Eh, don't worry about it. Don't have that much with me anyways. Name's...” he paused a bit, hopefully not noticeably. “JT.”

It wasn't a lie; JT really didn't bring much to New Anchorage. He had two weeks' worth of clothes, toiletries, and school supplies, but not much else. He didn't want to be materialistic. That was a trait belonging to Jimmy, not JT. And anyways, any items he cared about would be safer back on Earth. If his uncle was going to ship him off-planet so he could go back to Idaho as soon as possible, he wasn't going to waste time rifling through a twelve-year-old's room.

“JT? Hi, I'm Tom.”

“Nice to meet you Tommy.” Tom, too meek to say anything about the nickname, hurriedly finished moving the last of his stuff, leaving JT with a lofted twin-sized bed, a desk underneath the bed, and a drawer underneath the desk. He rolled his suitcase under the desk and dropped his backpack on top of it. Unpacking could wait for later. For now, he wanted to figure out as much as he could about the life he'd be living for the next year, so he started flipping through the folder he'd been given that morning.

New Anchorage didn't have the school year typically found on Earth. It alternated between one month spent working hard in school, studying just two classes in-depth, then another month in the fields helping out families that needed labor. It meant smaller class sizes, since the school only had to deal with half of the youth population at a time, and JT liked the concept of learning more practical skills in addition to academics. Usually new students were added to the cohort in the fields, but they were only a couple of days into the month and the cohort currently in school was a bit smaller. Given JT's academic history, the academy figured he'd be able to catch up. That month, he was assigned to calculus and special relativity. They were subjects he had tried teaching himself back on Earth, but the education offered at New Anchorage was bound to be much better than piecing together an

understanding from what he could find in Iowa.

Yeah, JT thought to himself, Tarsus was going to be a good spot for him.

How Yet Resolves the Governor

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It had taken about four days of being called “Tommy” before Tom retaliated and started coming up with various manipulations on JT’s name. JT found this utterly delightful. No one else at school was allowed to call Tom “Tommy,” nor was anyone else allowed to call JT “Jam and Toast.” Unsurprisingly, it didn’t take long after that for them to become close friends, and there were few moments outside of class that the two weren’t together.

That being said, most of their time was spent either in school or working on school. Months here were a little bit longer than on Earth, but cramming these advanced areas of math and physics into five weeks still wasn’t easy. In the interest of both spending time with Tom and trying to be at the top of his classes, JT formed what he viewed as the perfect study group. Deanna Eames was in special relativity with him, as well as literature with Tom. Rebekah Wiegand was in calculus with him, as well as botany with Tom. Deanna was vying for the top spot in relativity just as much as he was, and while Rebekah wasn’t actively trying to beat him in calculus, she was doing so regardless. And if the two of them joined Tom in coming up with the most ridiculous meanings for what “JT” stood for, it was a price he was willing to pay.

“Hey Joshua Tree.” It was the third Monday of the month, which meant all of their midterms were in two days. The study group was sprawled across JT and Tom’s room: Tom at his desk, JT sitting on his bed, Rebekah having stolen JT’s desk, and Deanna lying on the floor.

“Yes, Didi?” he replied with a sarcastically patient tone.

“This is stupid.”

“It’s the basis of the universe. We wouldn’t be able to travel in space without understanding this.”

“No, I get that it’s important. But time and distance changing themselves just so that the speed of light remains constant? That’s stupid.”

“Would you prefer that the speed of light change so that time and distance could remain the same? That would fuck up transporter beams even more than the ion cloud.”

“Don’t be an idiot, that’s even stupider.”

“Stop complaining then.”

“No.”

While they did actually collaborate on homework, this was how much of their studying progressed: Deanna pretending to complain about one of her classes, JT or Tom humoring her

with conversation, and Rebekah tuning everything out. It wasn't so much that they needed each other's help, but by studying in the same room they passively held each other accountable. Rebekah had admitted to JT once that without the group, she simply wouldn't study.

"I would still be doing fine in the class. I just wouldn't have as wide a margin ahead of you as I do," she had said. Given her performance in the first week, when JT hadn't yet forced the group together, he knew she wasn't exaggerating.

JT's friends at New Anchorage were all incredibly smart. On Earth Jimmy had felt isolated: he was considerably more academically-advanced than his peers, he was too much younger than his brother to really be friends with Sam, and he could tell his parents were itching to leave him behind to go back into space. He had been charming, but the kind of charming that works best on adults you don't know well. JT, on the contrary, was sociable, and he loved his friends here so much.

The rest of the month passed in a similar manner. The study group stopped being strictly a study group, and JT was just as likely to be found hanging out with Deanna or Rebekah as he was with Tom. They all had friends from before JT arrived on Tarsus of course, but even so, as the weeks progressed it became more and more likely to see the four of them together.

JT called an emergency meeting with a week left in the month. Which is to say, they were all hanging out in JT and Tom's room anyway when JT blurted without any preface, "How does the farming half of this work? I don't want to suddenly not see you for a month, and communicators are pretty iffy here."

"Relax, JT." Rebekah had a way of keeping a lighthearted tone while still making it clear she was taking him seriously. "We're still supposed to keep normal school hours."

"Plus," Deanna added, "no homework. Time off is actually off. We don't need communicators, we can just hang out in person."

"Not to mention, of course, you're coming to my parents' farm," Tom said.

This was the first time JT had heard of that. "I'm what?" He knew that a number of students at the academy had family who lived in or near New Anchorage. He knew that Tom was one of them. And he knew that the farming families got some say over what students were assigned to them for the month. But this was new information.

"Oh, did I not mention? My bad." The smirk on Tom's face betrayed that it was not, in fact, his bad.

"Tommy, I am going to kill you."

"Good luck with that, Justin Timberlake."

The Leighton family welcomed him with open arms, but put him straight to work. As he quickly learned, there was always weeding to do. The ion cloud covering the planet gave it an insulated, greenhouse-like atmosphere that made Tarsus perfect for growing crops year-round, but that also meant weeds sprung up year-round. For the first week, JT's job on the farm was to spend the morning tearing out weeds, then to stop by the goat pen and feed them all the leaves from it. Then he was planting okra and spinach and potatoes, or milking the cows and goats, or hauling hay, or looking after Tom's younger brothers. It was neat, learning about agriculture in this way. The farms in Iowa were massive, run by farming groups rather than families—nothing like this. However, he most looked forward to Saturdays, when his group of four would meet at the Riley's farm, where Deanna was staying, and marathon holovids all day.

They were all squeezed onto Deanna's bed, watching some holovid set on Earth. "Wait, hold up," JT said, sitting up straight. "I just realized it's March 30th back on Earth. I completely missed my birthday."

"Congrats, you're a teenager now. Do you have the sudden urge to rebel against authority?" Tom teased.

"Pretty sure that happened when I got sent here."

"You never said how that happened. Or at least, you never told me," Deanna said. Rebekah nodded her agreement.

"My parents were in space and my brother filed for emancipation, so it was just me and my uncle. My parents' house was in Iowa though, and my uncle lived in Idaho, so he just popped by every week or so to make sure I hadn't burned the place down. I wasn't getting any attention, of course I was gonna rebel."

"Yeah, but what landed you here?" Tom asked. "You called it juvie before you realized my family lived here."

"Stole my dad's motorbike, tried to teach myself how to drive it, and crashed."

"That's why you're supposed to figure out what you're doing before you actually do it," Rebekah said.

"Yeah I know that now, Bekah. Besides, it landed me here, so I wouldn't say I did too bad."

Rebekah and Tom were both in his linear algebra class the next month, and all four of them were together in literature. With 8,000 people around New Anchorage, there weren't that many kids to attend the school, so it wasn't surprising that he had a class with each of his friends, but it was still cause enough to celebrate.

Linear algebra was neat, and a new way of thinking about math, but it seemed relatively unnecessary to JT—most of the evident applications could be done using more conventional

methods. He'd probably learn its purpose in a later class, but for the month he focused on the literature class. This month it was a deep dive into some of Shakespeare's histories, reading Henry IV parts 1 and 2, and then finishing with Henry V. The plays all took place sequentially, and featured many of the same characters, and JT was fascinated with Prince Hal's development from a carefree youth into the Arthurian Henry V.

"How yet resolves the governor of the town?" he recited to Rebekah. "This is the latest..." "Shit, I know it's a weird word there, I just don't know what it is."

"Parle. 'This is the latest parle we will admit.' According to the annotations, an archaic form of parley." She looked up from the book. "I don't know why you're memorizing this one, there are better monologues."

"That's kinda why I like this one. Hal is portrayed as almost this mythic figure, but in this one he's making brutal threats while placing blame on the very people he's threatening. 'What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause?' It's interesting, it makes him more human. Which one are you doing, Bekah?"

"One of Hotspur's. I like that he dislikes the monarchy."

"You know he only dislikes Henry IV. He's not an anti-monarchist."

Rebekah shrugged. "I can pretend."

"How much have you memorized so far?"

"Most of it. I like rote memorization."

The month came to an end, which meant everyone had to recite their monologues in front of the class as part of the final. Their teacher Adrian applauded every monologue with equal passion and enthusiasm. It didn't stop JT's nerves. This was a literature class, not a theater class, and JT knew the grade was based on memorization rather than performance, but he wanted to perform it well anyhow. In the time he had spent working on the monologue he'd grown attached, and he wanted his classmates to understand it in the way that he did.

He started the monologue in a bored, disinterested voice.

"How yet resolves the governor of the town?
This is the latest parle we will admit;"

Slowly, his tone evolved into a concerned one. King Henry was masking his threats as a warning, pretending to look after the best interests of the town.

"Therefore to our best mercy give yourselves;
Or like to men proud of destruction
Defy us to our worst: for, as I am a soldier,
A name that in my thoughts becomes me best,
If I begin the battery once again,

I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur
Till in her ashes she lie buried.”

At this point in the speech, JT’s version of King Henry had dropped most pretense. The words he spoke now were a promise.

“The gates of mercy shall be all shut up,
And the flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart,
In liberty of bloody hand shall range
With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
Your fresh-fair virgins and your flowering infants.”

As if remembering his position, King Henry slowly reintroduced his earlier charade: the consequences of refusing surrender wouldn’t be his own fault, just the natural results of war.

“What is it then to me, if impious war,
Array'd in flames like to the prince of fiends,
Do, with his smirch'd complexion, all fell feats
Enlink'd to waste and desolation?”

Seamlessly, he transferred the blame from war to the town officials. After all, if they had surrendered, the fighting would be over.

“What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause,
If your pure maidens fall into the hand
Of hot and forcing violation?
What rein can hold licentious wickedness
When down the hill he holds his fierce career?
We may as bootless spend our vain command
Upon the enraged soldiers in their spoil
As send precepts to the leviathan
To come ashore. Therefore, you men of Harfleur,
Take pity of your town and of your people,
Whiles yet my soldiers are in my command;
Whiles yet the cool and temperate wind of grace
O'erblows the filthy and contagious clouds
Of heady murder, spoil and villany.”

JT laced the last line with menace, a reminder to the town officials that although his speech may have given him plausible deniability, King Henry knew exactly what he was saying.

Adrian stood and applauded as rapidly as his hands would let him, just as he had done for every student so far and as he was going to do for every student following. “Bravo, JT. Wonderfully executed. Next up, Emmett, it’s your turn.”

JT slid back into his seat between Tom and Deanna. “I do okay, Tommy?” he whispered, trying not to interrupt Emmett’s monologue.

“You’ve been practicing with Bekah, of course you memorized it perfectly. There was nothing Adrian could have knocked you down for. But you know that.”

“That’s not what I mean. I know I memorized it right. But did I deliver it well?”

“Yeah, JT. It was good, I promise.”

And then the classroom was applauding again, and Emmett was returning to his seat. Somebody else stood up. He let the conversation with Tom fizzle out, so as not to be too obviously rude, but he zoned out for the rest of the speeches.

He thought he’d go home with Tom again at the start of the new month, but apparently Rebekah’s family called dibs first. He got to try his hand at harvesting peanuts this time. Harvesting was definitely different from planting and weeding as he had done at the Leightons’ farm, and in general he just felt a lot less confident.

“Mrs. Wiegand?” he asked around the end of his first week. It was lunchtime, which was far from an organized mealtime in the Wiegand household. Lunch was either whenever you got hungry and wandered in, or whenever Mrs. Wiegand decided you had been outside working too long without food. Anxious to earn the food he was eating, JT usually opted for the latter option, so that day it was just the two of them at lunch. “Does the white fuzz mean it’s not ready to be harvested, or that it is ready to be harvested?”

“White fuzz? What are you talking about, son?”

“On the underside of the leaves.”

“There’s not supposed to be a white fuzz at all. Finish your food, then come show me what you’re talking about.”

As it turned out, she was right. The white fuzz was not supposed to be there. Soon the task switched from harvesting peanuts to figuring out which ones had the mold and which ones might be salvageable. If the peanuts stayed in the ground a bit too long, they could deal. But if they all went bad from whatever the white fuzz was, or if the good ones were mixed in with the bad, there wouldn’t be anything edible from the harvest at all.

It soon turned to Saturday, but JT and Rebekah didn’t get a weekend. They doubted anyone in New Anchorage did. News came in about the fuzz being found at other farms as well. On the Leightons’ farm it had hit the okra; on the Riley’s farm it had hit the potatoes. Hardly any crops were spared.

The days didn’t pass in distinct units. JT could remember the order of events, but not the time between them. At some point, the Wiegand household stopped eating lunch, just breakfast and dinner. Later, they heard from Deanna that Kevin Riley, who was in the alternately timed cohort at the academy, got sent home to help on the farm. Time passed, and then the New Anchorage Council announced a live assembly to distribute ration packs and information.

There wasn't anywhere that could hold all 8,000 citizens, but the academy had an assembly space that could take half the population. Every household was assigned to one of two time slots. Kids like JT without families on Tarsus were all told to show up to the later time, but the Wiegands were scheduled for the first assembly. They all took the day off, JT waited outside with Deanna, the Rileys, and the Leightons while the Wiegands went inside. They emerged about twenty minutes later, each carrying a pack of rations, and they gave a summary of the information given. The blight was attacking most crops, and while they were trying to reach Starfleet for aid, penetrating the ion cloud was proving to be difficult, so the colony would be taking measures to ensure the rations last until Starfleet's arrival.

"I got no clue why they made us come all the way to town for that," Mrs. Wiegand said. "They could have just delivered a letter with the rations attached. Would have been easier on everyone's behalf."

"And now we have to wait two whole hours so that JT can hear the exact same thing."

"Rebekah!" Mrs. Wiegand scolded. "Waiting for JT is not an imposition."

"I just meant that they should have counted him with our household."

"You're right about that they should have."

When finally it was time for the second assembly, JT and his friends lingered at the back. They knew what the announcement was going to say already; they were just there for the ration packs. But no officials stepped forward in front of the crowd. The words that came over the loudspeaker were not the words anyone was expecting to hear. And neither was the voice.

"You may have heard from the citizens attending the earlier assembly today that the council is preparing for the event that contacting Starfleet proves impossible." Rebekah had not mentioned that their literature teacher Adrian Kodos was the one to deliver the message. "Our next supply ship is not scheduled for a few months, and resources are limited. There were debates on how to proceed—it is the nature of a council to disagree. But in the face of famine there is no time for disagreements. To ensure expediency, we needed change in government. We needed a revolution. I have been appointed governor for the duration of this tragedy, because I am willing to do what has to be done to ensure the survival of the colony." That did not sound good. JT began inching towards the door, only just now noticing that the employee manning it was armed. "In other words, the revolution is successful. But survival depends on drastic measures. Your continued existence represents a threat to the well-being of society. Your lives mean slow death to the more valued members of the colony. Therefore, I have no alternative but to sentence you to death. Your execution is so ordered, signed Kodos, Governor of Tarsus IV."

Chaos broke out. JT elbowed the guard in the ribs, and as the man doubled over, ushered his friends through. Others tried to follow, but got shot by other guards. JT, Deanna, Tom, and Kevin Riley had made it out, and Tom's brothers were about to follow, but suddenly everyone inside the building disintegrated. At some point, Adrian Kodos had turned the assembly room into an antimatter chamber.

Tom froze, staring at the doorway where his brothers had just been. But there wasn't time for grief. JT grabbed him and ran towards where the Wiegands were waiting, ran towards his only hope of safety.

Chapter End Notes

Kodos being Jim's literature teacher was stolen from [Once More Unto the Breach](#) by [AnEscapeFromReality](#).

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