

## **Giovanni “Pops” Turrelli**

“Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds.”  
-George Eliot

It’s a good life you’ve got. Peaceful, tranquil, full of everyday dreams and hopes. Of course, if someone had told you thirty years ago that you would eventually end up running a hamburger shop on a planet you never heard of before, you would have thought them crazy.

But you were young then, and filled with idealism. The Betazoid Monarchy had fallen when you were seventeen, and you agreed whole-heartedly that its fall was a good thing. The Monarchy had been extremely inefficient, wasteful, and cheated generations of Betazoids out of dreams of galactic greatness. You felt that whatever followed would have to be better. And for a time, you were right. Until you found out the truth.

You joined the Space Naval Academy as soon as you were old enough. The thought of flying a spaceship, charting the stars and fighting the enemies of the new Betazoid Empire was the kind of life you wanted. Adventure, daring, mystery, everything that a young man holds dear. You studied hard, knowing that only through devotion and hard work could you realize your dreams of being an ace pilot. For your work, you graduated first in your class of fifteen hundred.

You were immediately sent off to the front lines to fight. The Empire had allied itself with the Thwarkian Empire, and both were in a titanic struggle against the Commonwealth. At the Academy, you had been instructed time and time again that the Commonwealth’s claims of the Thwarkian and Betazoid’s “barbarism” was merely a cover for its fear that it would lose its outlying colonies to the new might of the two empires.

For two years you piloted a fighter, joining in nearly every major battle along the Kwithian front, rising through the ranks like mercury. Soon, you were a fleet commander, watching the battles from a cruiser as wings of fighters under your command threw themselves against the Commonwealth and their minor allies.

And if you had not been curious, things would have remained like that. You were one of the youngest and brightest commanders the Betazoids had, and it was considered likely that you would become a fleet admiral soon enough. But your curiosity got the better of you. Your wing had been sent to escort several carriers from the newly conquered Betazoid colony Gromitz to a major Thwarkian outpost. Along the way, you went through the classified documents pertaining to the carriers’ cargo.

They were carrying the former residents of Gromitz. Apparently, the Betazoid troops that had conquered Gromitz had rounded everyone up and loaded them with their

bare possessions onto these carriers. And they were on their way to camps in Thwarkian space where they would be... disposed of.

You had often heard brash Thwarkian pilots talk about their racial destiny and superiority. It never occurred to you that they might believe it, and believe it to a degree where they would wipe out entire races simply to make the universe a cleaner place. And even if you had believed that, you never would have believed that the Betazoid leaders would be helping out. But the documents in front of you told you that it was all true.

You really had no choice at that point. Well, perhaps you simply could have ignored it, and pretended that things were in the right. But you knew too much. And you couldn't ignore the horror that the Thwarkians were perpetrating. You had to stop it.

And so, secretly, you approached the Commonwealth. You told them what you had found. They did not react surprised; they had heard of the camps that "lesser races" found themselves in. Their major problem was that they did not know where the camps were located, and therefore could not do anything about it. You offered to help. They accepted gladly.

So you became a Commonwealth spy. You continued doing whatever Betazoid Command told you to, but every time you received news of where a major Thwarkian camp was located, or of certain ships carrying races to be "removed," you informed the Commonwealth, and they would make a major attack, capturing and freeing those who only hours before had assumed themselves doomed.

Of course, eventually you were found out. No spy every operates in secret for too long, and it only took a few years for Betazoid High Command to put the pieces together. Luckily, the Commonwealth informed you of the danger in time, and you were able to steal a fighter and prove to your pursuers that you were still the best damned pilot in all of the empire.

You were tempted to fly to the nearest Commonwealth outpost and defect, but you simply couldn't do it. You were (and are) still too proud to be a Betazoid to turn traitor and help decimate your people and destroy everything they had worked so long for. So you decided to take a different way out- you would fly to a planet that you could survive upon, one backwards enough in technology that no news of the Great War would reach them, a place where you could serenely live out the rest of your days without having to choose between destroying your people or condemning many other races to that fate. So you flew to a little planet just off the maps, a planet only talked about as a myth. A little planet called Hanshak.

Unfortunately, Hanshak was in the midst of a nuclear war, and you felt it really wouldn't be an option to try and land there and set up a life for yourself. So, fuel running low, you flew to the next available life-supporting planet. Earth.

Out of fuel, it was all you could do to keep from killing yourself in the crash-landing. Somehow, you made it through alive, in one piece, and without causing any sort of uproar. You snuck out of the craft and towards a small village, hoping to see what kind of people these humans were, and what kind of language they spoke.

The humans, amazingly, looked exactly like Betazoids. And even better, the language they spoke was roughly similar to ancient Betaspeak in form, and you were able to pick up most of it within a couple of weeks. You found that the humans were a relatively peaceful and accepting people, and you found yourself delighted by their company. You met a young woman in the town who stole your heart totally, and after a wonderful courtship, you and she were married. You settled down in the town and began working at a restaurant as a cook, where you were constantly complemented on your incredible desserts. It was peaceful then, in pre-war Italy.

Unfortunately, only a year later World War II erupted. You were lucky enough to avoid the draft by virtue of Glurk. Glurk is the power that all Betazoids have to subtly change the universe around them, manipulating moods and changing the situation to make a benefit from it. Most of the beings you had met in your travels were relatively resistant to Glurk, but these humans seemed to show no resistance to it whatsoever. You try to make sure that you don't accidentally change things or force them to do things they wouldn't otherwise do. That would simply be rude, in your opinion. But you had a wife, and you youthful fantasies of war had all been dispelled. So you "convinced" the government to give you the exemption you needed.

Unfortunately, in an amazing case of déjà vu, it turned out that a race of peoples called "Jews" were being rounded up and sent to Germany for extermination, just as you had seen in the Galactic War. Needless to say, you knew you could not stand back and let it occur. You joined the Italian Resistance, and fought valiantly to bring down Mussolini.

When the war was over, your life was a shambles. You had fought hard and won for the right cause, but Italy had been nearly destroyed. And your wife, Maria, had died while giving birth to your son Antonio. You were despondent. All around you were ruins, and you were supposed to raise a child amidst the rubble.

Luckily, you were saved from that. As a show of appreciation for your fight with the rebellion, the local commander of the American armed forces offered to give you a free and clear passage to America. You had often heard people talking about America as a wonderful place, and you leapt at the chance to bring your son up somewhere far away from this destruction.

So you came to America. You came to Arizona, where the climate roughly matches where you grew up in Betazoid. You used what little money you had saved to open a malt shop/hamburger stand/ice cream parlor in a little town called San Inguon. The teenagers seem to like you and they definitely like hanging out at your place, called "Pops." You prepare the food, make the floats, and dispense advice and words of wisdom

to the kids. It's a good job. You're happy, you're secure, and America is a wonderful place for Tony to grow up. He's a good kid. A little of a wiseass, but a good kid nonetheless.

**Stock quote:** "Hey, kid, whamsamatta? Maybe a chocolate float do you some good, eh?"

**Mannerisms:** Pops is the standard archetype of the guy who runs the malt shop. Big, friendly, cheerful, and always ready with good advice. Speak with an moderate Italian accent, and generally try to help everybody in any way you can.

### **People You Know:**

**J.D. Koln:** The local troublemaker. Runs around with his gang, pulling pranks and making mischief. Still, you know that deep down, he's really a good kid who just needs a helping hand.

**Robert Sherman:** One of J.D.'s fellow troublemakers. He's just going through a rebellious phase. Eventually, he'll grow out of it and settle down.

**Nick Kerensky:** Another of J.D.'s fellow troublemakers. Big and strong, but not nearly as dumb as everyone thinks he is.

**James Daniels:** Young, idealistic, and determined to right every wrong. You see a lot of your younger self in him. He's a good kid.

**Timmy Carroll:** Always has his nose in a book. While it's good to learn things, he really should spend some time out *doing* things, living life instead of trying to read about it.

**Tony Turrelli:** Your son. He's got a big mouth, but you have to expect that, growing up with a father everyone made fun of for his accent, and never having known his mother. He's a good kid at heart, though, and you'll do anything for him.

**Mark Sturvin:** Son of the richest man in town. Very shy. You think he's afraid people will see him for his wallet rather than himself.

**Mary Jenkins:** J.D.'s girlfriend. She puts on a good act of being happy-go-lucky, but you've seen her sitting alone in a booth when she thinks no one's watching. She's hiding how bad she really feels.

**Teresa Kerensky:** A bit of a tomboy, but you have to expect that from someone who grew up around a gas station. She'll grow out of it and turn into a fine young woman.

**Catherine Thomas:** Her, you're not so sure about. You get kind of a prickling sensation on the back of your neck when she's around. She's trouble.

**Margaret Smith:** She's not really too bright, but she's got a great personality. She reminds you of your wife, Maria, at times.

**Laura Fetner:** Class cheerleader and all-around perky girl. You get a strange feeling around her as well; not strange-bad like with Catherine, but strange.

**Wendy Mitchell:** Class reporter. A good kid, if a bit of a snoop. Still, a woman trying to make her way in a man's world needs a lot of fight in her, and she's got it. She'll do pretty well for herself.

### **Goals:**

**1. Keep the Shop running well.** Serve food, make sure everyone's doing alright, that sort of thing. Basically, do your standard con suite job.

**2. Help out the kids.** If someone looks down or scared, talk to them and try to help them out. Dispense words of wisdom. Suggest things they can do to fix their problems. And if all else fails, give them a free ice cream float. That always works.

**3. Keep your secrets secret.** You seriously doubt that anyone is going to ask you if you're an alien from outer space, but don't make silly slips that'll get people to wonder about you. Even Tony doesn't know. You probably won't tell him, either; what possible good could it do?