

Papadad: a portrait

by James Knight

Papadad has one good eye. The other fell out during a rant and has since been replaced by a rifle scope, which he uses to scrutinise enemies.

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Papadad is an authority on everything, even topics he has not researched. He expatiates on these at the dinner table, to a mute audience.

He's easily antagonised. His rifle scope eyepiece swivels in your direction. The machine mouth monologues madly.

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When Papadad has a piss he leaves the bathroom door open. He likes to impress everyone with the sound of the Jovian torrent.

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Ever watchful for enemies, Papadad never sleeps. He lies in a state of partial inertia, fingers twitching around imaginary necks.

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Papadad labours under the delusion that originality is achieved simply by contradicting widely accepted values and beliefs.

Everything you think is wrong, according to him. Negation is his *métier*. Unknowingly, he's as dada as a dodo.

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Papadad's most treasured possession is his pair of scissors. He cuts people out of family photos, shreds disagreeable articles in *The Times*.

He nurtures his grudges, cooing at them, tickling their tummies. They gurgle and grumble.

They're the love of his life.

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Papadad does not consider children to be human beings. Consequently none of his were ever named.

One night, he throttles the tentacled abomination hiding under his son's bed. There's only room for one monster in this house!

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