

# THE MARGRAVE

Additional Material for *The Margrave* by Paul Mackintosh

## The Lure

The ghouls may try to lure the PCs from the road. Perhaps a scapula (*the plate-like shoulder bone*), its edges gnawed to sharpness like a primitive tool, could come spinning out at the PCs like a discus? If the PCs still will not come after them, then they could try a more involved ploy, mimicking the sounds of a child or woman (it is hard to tell which) crying for help.

*"Help me, please. Help! Help me now. Please come."*

This voice sounds pathetic, strained, but at the same time just noticeably 'wrong'. If the PCs hesitate, the cries come again, perhaps now sounding more annoyed than fearful.

*Note: PCs may find their mounts become very afraid here. If the PCs try to ride their horses into the woods then their mounts will have to pass **Fear Tests**, otherwise the riders will have to work very hard to control them. **Ride (Agility) Tests** are appropriate – just staying on a horse is **Challenging**; moving towards the ghouls should be **Hard**.*

## A Set Piece – the Land-Slide Trap

If the PCs chase off into the woods their pursuit will lead downwards, until they suddenly come to a high earthen bank rising sharply before them. Any leading ghouls will begin scrambling up, while at the top several more ghouls appear.

Helped by the ghouls above, the earth bank now collapses, the entire upper lip falling forwards so that it threatens to bury the PCs. Any climbing

ghouls will obviously be caught up in the tumbling earth, as well as one or two of the ghouls who were peering over. Any PCs really going for it at the front will definitely be affected. To avoid being buried in the first place have them try **Perception Tests** (modified by **Trapfinder** Talent) and/or **Agility Tests**. PCs actually attempting to climb the near-vertical wall of soil will almost certainly end up fully buried. For these poor sods, life just got very hard, unless their friends can help them promptly, or they can pass one of a series of ever more difficult **Strength Tests** (first **Challenging**, then **Hard**, then **Very Hard** as their breath runs out). Don't worry if a PC slips into unconsciousness because there's a good get out – simply have a ghoul pull them out. (It's what ghouls do!)

[For the ghouls' stats see *Old World Bestiary* pg.94. Even though a BS of 0% is listed there, I reckon ghouls should be able to throw things if they want, so I assume a BS of 25% for missiles.]

## Optional encounter

A fat corpse, apparently twitching, sits upon a chair in the middle of the room, facing the door by which the PCs enter. Its long robes trail to the ground. One arm is bent round the back of the chair as if clutching something behind its back. Its head lolls about with each twitch. Is this horrible bloated thing dead, or is it undead?

Behind the corpse, at first unseen, rests a wounded ghoul gnawing upon the bones of the arm it has tugged around. One of the ghoul's legs is missing below the knee, so that now it just sits where it dragged itself, slowly chewing upon its grisly meal. It has deliberately positioned itself for

concealment from the door, hoping to avoid disturbance. A wounded ghoul presents very little in the way of a challenge for the PCs, but its sorrowful, pathetic look whilst absently chewing upon the bloody stump, could well cause enough revulsion to warrant a **FearTest**. The slurping sounds and bloody stench add to the horror!

## Using Hagleb's Ghost

### Palpable terror

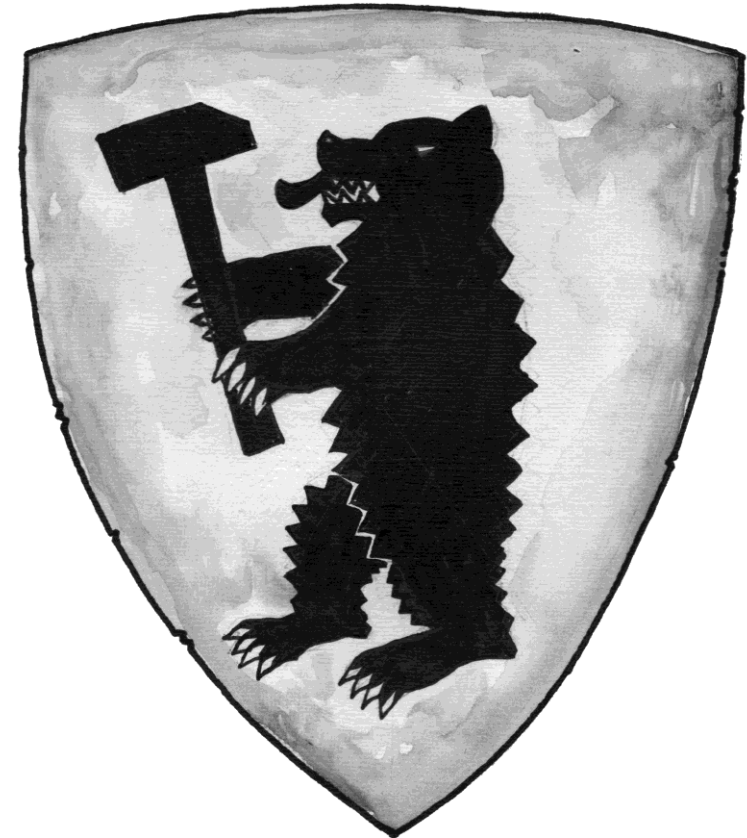
*A quiet descends upon the place, as if all sounds have been muffled, and a fresh chill in the night air makes your skin clammy. Then a breeze enters through the windows and doors, which agitates the cobwebs (on candelabra or torch brackets). Your next breath tightens your throats and sends shivers down your backs. Something has come.*

### The ghost's proximity

*Now there is a noisome stench, foul and bloody, bringing with it a nausea that somehow lends a weakness to your limbs [especially those PCs who have failed **Fear Tests**]. At the same time your senses seem to heighten: every angle is made sharper to your eyes, every insect and shadow clarifies; every sound falls a degree closer, as if lured into proximity.*

Here are some ideas for further ghostly goings-on you can use if circumstances allow:

- **As the PCs move to a different room, or through a door:** Something small shifts, moves or falls suddenly, jolted by the passing of the ghost.
- **As the PCs say something which might interest the ghost:** *Right behind you there is a sound, like a sudden intake of breath.*
- **If a PC is trying desperately to see something:** *Nothing is seen for a while ... then ... there! In the doorway, a shadow-like movement, when no-one moved. Or if not a shadow, then perhaps a momentary change in a patch of light to take the shape of a person? It fades instantly when you try to look squarely at it, as if seeping into the wall itself.*



Coat of Arms by David Bezzina