There are a number of actors who have managed to parlay a distinctive or unusual physical appearance into an iconic screen image. There's the great Michael Berryman, unforgettable as the savage Pluto in THE HILLS HAVE EYES. There's recently deceased Richard Lynch's scarred visage glowering as the chief terrorist in INVASION U.S.A.… and then there's BURIAL GROUND's Peter Bark. [NSFW imagery below!]

BURIAL GROUND (1980), A.K.A. LA NOTTI DEL TERRORE or ZOMBI 3, spins the cautionary tale of three bourgeois couples visiting a palatial estate in the countryside for a weekend getaway. Unbeknownst to them, a portly archaeologist has just awoken a posse of skull-faced undead from an underground tomb. The zombies roam the estate grounds and soon set upon the hapless couples. Victims are swarmed, overwhelmed and dismantled; the aftermath has typically overlong scenes of zombies squatting over hollow torsos and sifting through the customary pile of goopy pig intestines and tripe from the butcher shop dumpster.

The above marks the extent of GROUND's crepe-paper plotting; story being admittedly a secondary concern for yet another uninspired parasite to affix its mouth onto George Romero's underbelly. Instead, the audience gets to marvel at the bizarre casting of diminutive Peter Bark as Michael, playing young (?) son to the luscious Mariangela Giordano. In his mid-twenties at the time of GROUND's production, the pseudonymous Bark has been described as a midget or little person, although he's most likely just an abnormally short man. With his delicate build and pants hiked up to his ribcage, his odd pageboy haircut and the wide eyes of a startled barn owl peering out from his lightbulb-shaped head, Bark's appearance in GROUND was destined for cult adulation. Also, more sickening than any of the film's gore gags (by Lucio Fulci's effects ace Gianetto De Rossi) is Michael's disturbing mommy fixation, an incest sub-plot that midway through the film has Bark perched on Giordano's lap and begging her to breast feed him as she once did; a scene that would leave even Dr. Freud gagging.