

GEARS & GASLIGHTS

Eradicating Spirits and Manifestations for Fame and Profit



NETHERIUM

It seemed like the solution to all the world's problems, Netherium. Free energy just floating all around us. Scientists able to tap into that energy to power devices of incredible wonder, changed the world. The late 1800s are a remarkable time to be alive.

Yet...some how tapping into the Netherium unleashed a hell upon the world, although the connection is still not full known. It is clear that once Netherium began to be used, dangerous ghosts, spirits, and worse came into our world.

The weakest of spirits haunt, the strongest can manifest physical bodies. Regardless of form, they seek out dark places with histories of bloodshed; castles, dungeons, prisons, or even seemingly normal place with dark pasts.

In response, professional teams of ghost hunters and monster slayers arose to combat this otherworldly menace. Some do it for the fame, some do it for the noble cause, but mostly they do it for the high fees they can charge for eradicating creatures of the night that prey on mortals.

SAY WHAT?

Basically, Netherium is the spirit shield that keeps the departed out of our reality. It is a form of energy, but once scientists discovered it and started using it to power devices, it tore holes in the spirit shield. This allowed malevolent and harmful spirits back into our world (good spirits have, with rare exception, no reason to come back).

Ghost hunters uses a combination of bullets and swords to destroy physical manifestations of these devilish spirits, but for true ghosts, all manner of clever devices are needed including Anti-Netherial Projectors, Netherial Cages, and other marvelous devices.

Successful ghost hunting teams are world famous and fabulously wealthy from eradication fees, but most die grisly and anonymous deaths

Game play can take place anywhere in the world during the late 1800s, but again, the spirits are especially drawn to dark places with sordid pasts which can lead to a lot of dungeon crawling too.

GHOST HUNTERS

Professional (hell...even amateur) ghost hunters are built with standard Risus rules: 10 dice; Hooks and Tales encouraged. If the Risus Companion is in use, Lucky Shots and Questing Dice are fine too. Good Cliches to pick are those related to the science of Netherium; fighting with melee weapons; shooting rifles, crossbows, or other missile weapons; being sneaky; being observant and spotting clues; having knowledge of spirits and manifestations strengths and weaknesses, and so on.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Beyond the gear expected of those living in the late 1800s, the science of Netherium has given rise to many tools found valuable to ghost hunters, including (but not limited to):

Anti-Netherial Projector: These rifle looking devices with battery back-packs fire reverse polarity Netherium lightning bolts that can harm spirits...*but do not harm manifestations or any other living thing.*

Clairvayer: Portable devices the size of a doctor's kit that allow one to speak into it and have their voice transmitted up to a mile away and be heard by those using another Clairvayer.

Clockwork Rifle: A specially made rifle capable of firing multiple bullets with each trigger pull from a large magazine of ammunition.

Gas Lamp: Part regular gaslight, part Netherial science, this large hand-held device casts a pale greenish-white glow in the direction it is pointed, up to 10 meters.

Netherial Lenses: Specially made glass lenses which can be set in goggles, monocles, or even regular eye glasses that allow one to see spirits even when they are invisible.

Netherial Cage: A metal tube, capped, and lined inside and out with special glass (similar to lenses above) along with all manner of circuitry...that when opened draws in and captures Netherium and any nearby spirits.

Nether Conveyance: Much like a horse drawn carriage, but entirely self-powered by Netherium Engines. It is guided by a pilot, and can attain speeds up to 60 km per hour!

Players are encouraged to create other Netherial or steampunk devices.

SPIRITS AND MANIFESTATIONS

There are two basic forms of Netherial monsters: Spirits and Manifestations.

A spirit is basically a ghost. At it's weakest it can make small objects move, change the temperature, make noise and the like. At it's most powerful, they shake houses, drain life, cause fear, change the weather and so on. All spirits are invisible but can be seen when they want to be seen (often to scare) or via Netherial Lenses.

Only Netherial devices can affect a spirit. Guns, swords, and even explosions will not harm a spirit. A spirit reduced to zero dice is cast back into the Netherium and may only return by GM fiat.

A manifestation is a spirit which has invested it's being into a non-living object or objects and bring them to mobile life. This can mean inhabiting old corpses (skeletons, zombies, and ghouls!), dead trees, scarecrows, or even things like suits of armor. The most powerful manifestations can even create monsters out of the worst nightmares from bits and pieces.

Manifestations cannot be harmed by Netherial science (such as Anti-Netherial Projectors), but the physical form of a manifestation can be destroyed by bullets, swords, hammers, fire and the like. A manifestation brought to zero dice simply falls down into it's component parts (if applicable).

EXAMPLE SPIRIT

Damning Shriek (4): The DS appears as a rotting elderly mother-type when seen, and can sense the worst fears and self-doubts about the living. Beyond the typical abilities of a spirit, it screams ear-splitting (literally) derision and insults at victims, reducing them to cowering, crying, fetal balls that eventually bleed out through the ears.

EXAMPLE MANIFESTATION

Tin Ogre (4): The TO is a monster of the kitchen, taking the form of a humanoid comprised of pots, pans, utensils, knives, forks, sometimes even full stoves, and any other metal laying about. A TO is quite strong, sturdy, resistant to damage and capable of crushing or cutting depending on it's composition. They are simple brutes.