

Hollywood Animal Detoxification Services (HADeS)

On the surface, Hollywood Animal Detoxification Services (HADeS) looks like one of your standard SoCal crystal and chakra weirdnesses: they bring animals to Hollywood productions in order to “cleanse the workspace of negative stress energy by cooperatively using primal life forces.” Basically, this means that the company brings in dogs and cats for the cast and crew to pet, play with, and feed (the crew is not supposed to feed the animals, but everybody does anyway, and HADeS never seems to really mind). Sometimes HADeS will provide something more exotic, like a rabbit or a sheep; on one memorable occasion the company brought in an actual cow, and encouraged everyone to touch it. Oddly enough, that story never made the papers; you’d expect it to, seeing that the movie in question more or less swept the Oscars that year.

And, yes: any group familiar with the occult and the way things seem to work out in most game universes will take one look at what HADeS is doing, take another look at the company acronym, and conclude “they’re sacrificing animals in order to bring blessings down upon a movie.” And that’s exactly what is happening: the animals are

brought in, ritually associated with a particular production to make them part of it, and are then discreetly sacrificed in propitiation to various deities of the arts. HADeS goes through some trouble to find animals free of blemish, and it charges Hollywood studios quite a lot for both beneficial charms and general haruspicy. Which Hollywood pays, readily enough: at this point, the studios need to have the charms just to keep a clean working environment, spiritually speaking. Plus, knowing the box office ahead of time is just generally great to know.

Now here is the delicate point. While HADeS is a potential walking PR disaster (“potential” because it also sells its services to all the major media organizations, not to mention being on permanent retainer for every state and federal elected officer in the state of California), it’s not particularly “evil.” HADeS buys the animals legally, they don’t torture their sacrifices, they *never* cast evil magic spells at all, and they maintain decent sanitary practices. Which leads to an interesting question: should a party of adventurers who discover this situation feel automatically obligated to do something about it, aside of course from putting HADeS on retainer?

Of course, if that does not suit the GM then there’s any number of radical animal rights’ groups out there that

might feel suitably incensed -- and more importantly, terrified -- over the idea of magical animal sacrifices. Some of those groups may wish to make a violent response. And a sub-faction in one of the violent groups might even decide to fight fire with fire, only using humans because they all hate humans anyway. Things can get pretty **adventuresome** at that point.

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