

My Den of Evil Wicked Additions review

Posted by L - 2007/02/21 00:50

I considered posting this in one of several other threads, but I decided to give it its own new post. My DoE WA set arrived today -- nice and fast! -- and I eagerly ripped it open to feast on the evil within.

So here are my thoughts....

Several pieces were not at all what I expected. The red decorative glyph in the large floorpiece, for example, is MUCH bigger than I expected. The dragon archway is, as several people before me have posted, much nicer in person than in pics. It seems like mine does not feature as elaborate a paintjob as I expected, either -- they are more straightforwardly red and less "marbled" with yellowish "fat," they look less flayed and more like just red. They do, however, look really, really cool.

The curved corners are most welcome, as this sort of set really benefits from more curves and fewer sharp angles.

The stairs "up" look very nice, bigger than I expected, and appropriately splayed. The stairs "down" however seem to need another pass with a drybrush -- the stairs are so dark they all but vanish, which hampers the effect of having them at all.

The columns are neat, though I'm still not crazy about the purple, or the asymmetry of them -- tops are bigger than bases. In general, I'd have liked to see either more ornate, or at least more symmetrical, columns for the DoE.

I have to agree with criticisms of the pit, as well, sadly. This was the piece I was most excited about, the one thing that had me tempted to get the WA before I decided I didn't have the space or the money for it.

Unfortunately, the "souls" in the pit are just not to my taste. This was clearly a deliberate decision to render them somewhat stylized, more Munch than Goya, but I think that at this size -- they're much bigger than the trapped souls under the floor -- they just look too smooth and round. Plus, the shade of pink on them just didn't work for me. Given what Stefan has said on the forums before, it seems clear to me that he does what he wants to do with DF, and hopes we enjoy it, but like any artist, he is always going to go with his own imagination and inclinations rather than let some committee of fans tell him how to work. And that is absolutely 100% the right way to do things -- it's what makes DF so spectacular. But every now and then, some of us ARE gonna have a different taste, and in this case, that's what happened. This just isn't how I would have done it.

In the end, I rate the set a B+ "as is" -- a lot of it is useful and quite cool (those big floors, those dragon heads, the stairs) but some of it disappoints.

Why did I add the "as is" there? Well, because I'm not one to sit back and accept a B+ from DF.

First project: I like the big floors, but they're too distinctive to need twice. I don't want all my big DoE rooms to look identical after all. So I took a paint brush to one of them, deciding that the glyph seemed to have magical properties and that, as with many magical glyphs, it should have an "off" position. So now I've got a floor that's blackened and scorched, with a dark glyph. Whatever power this once had, it's done now.

I'm also going to take a drybrush to the "down" stair floorpieces, just a light pass to bring out the steps a bit so you can tell what you're lookin' at.

Finally, I took a brown inkwash to the souls in the pit, and then I just painted them brown, I'm gonna drybrush them a bit with some fleshtone later. I'm still not crazy about the decision to make them smooth round blobs, but if the paint job is a bit more mottled and messy, it'll fit more with what I envision. I am glad other fans like these poor trapped souls as they are, but I'll be much happier with them after I modify them a bit.

So -- after altering the pit, giving myself an alternative large floor piece, and sharpening the stairs, I'd give the set an A-. It isn't quite the homerun that the cavernous water sets are, or the MBS, but it is certainly worth having if you're gonna build up a DoE collection. And in anticipation of the DoE Room Set, it's pretty much a must-have...

Expect pics of all my modifications with time....

L

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Posted by Harneloot - 2007/02/21 04:18

How much to tweak my set?

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