

Do-Li, who watches over the forest



"No-one knows where she comes from. She's only ever seen wandering through the forests, her bare feet softly stroking the undergrowth, her lantern a dancing light between the trees at night. Occasionally she'd stop, and the small tree strapped to her back would sprout a new twig, visibly growing into a little sapling of its own, which she'd carefully put down to one day become a new tree."

The pose is a really specific one, with the clenched right fist and upwardly opened left hand, and the wide stance. As I really didn't want to change even the slightest bit of it, playing by the rules, it took a bit of time and imagination to come up with a story to start from. Her right hand looked as if she was holding something rather light (her arm being outstretched), and with a small section (as her hand is completely closed). Her left hand looked like something could spring from it, and a little plant seemed to look plausible. Then there needed a reason for the little plant to be there, and so the idea for the backpack, and Do-Li, was born.

As the anatomy for the model was already settled, I tried to make it an exercise in textures, keeping clearly defined volumes to avoid clutter, but giving them all varying grades of texture and detail to work from as a painter, and try my hand at as a sculptor. I wanted the back - which is more often than not a bit neglected on miniatures - to really have a character of its own, putting the majority of the detail there, and keeping the front rather simple. I experimented with stippling texture onto the dress (which sadly isn't very visible in the pictures, but it works in reality), which would match the rougher image I had in mind of her clothes. As it's a miniature ultimately designed for painting, I hoped the different textures would provide for an accessible miniature (making washes and drybrushing easy and effective techniques) while giving lots of opportunities for the experienced painter in terms of large cloth areas for freehand, and complicated lighting patterns with the lantern and overhanging tree.

I designed her to be castable, but my limited experience (I've only had one very simple sculpt - a large maggot-like monster - cast so far, and haven't even seen the results of that) may prove an issue here. I've sculpted her to be split up in two separate parts, her body and her backpack, which both have very limited undercuts going on (pretty much only on the level of texture). I'm a bit worried about some of the rather thin elements, or the complicated shapes of the tree branches. I'd be very happy if I could get some feedback on this, and would gladly change around some bits if that made for a more castable model. The model was sculpted in Fimo Professional, Green Stuff and Magic Sculp.