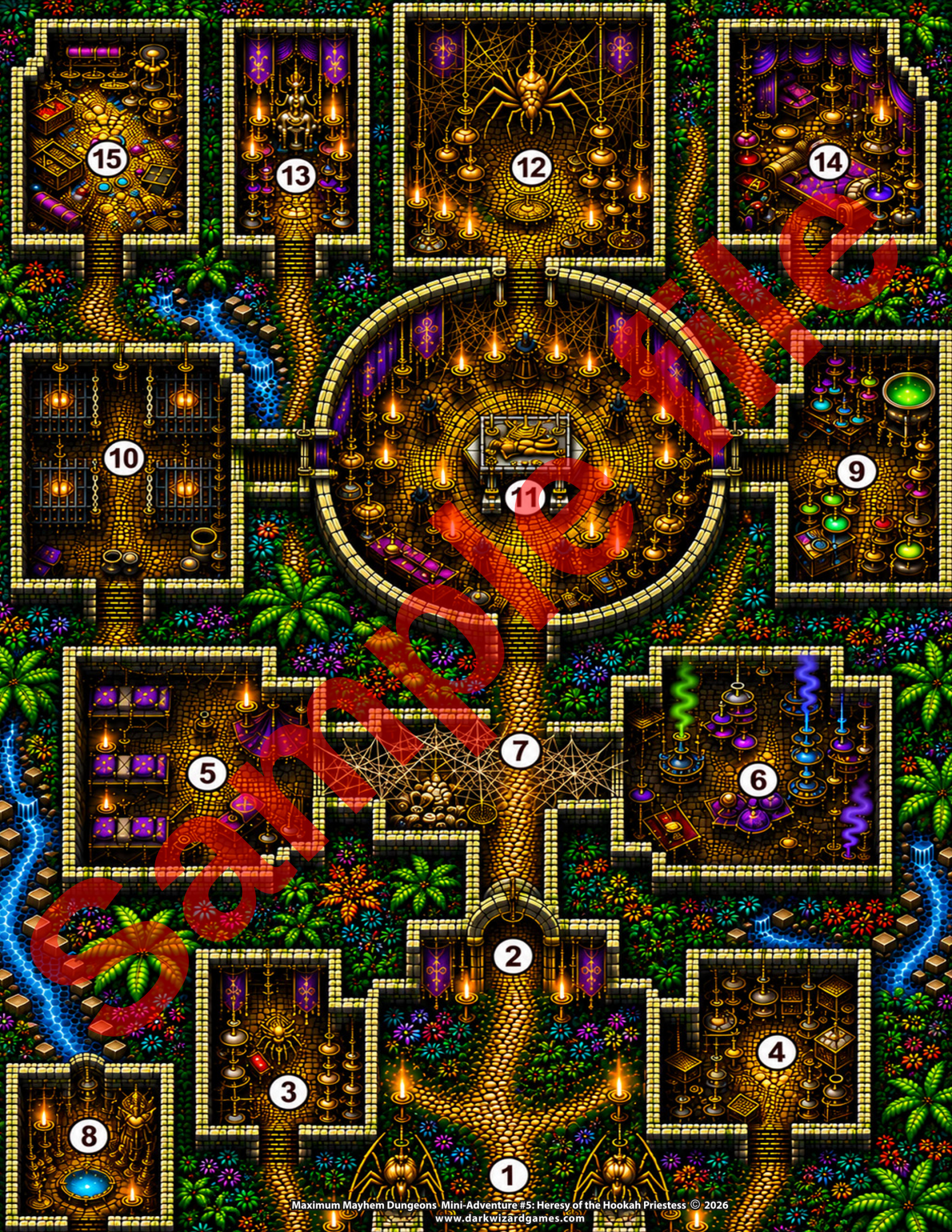




Maximum Mayhem Dungeons™ Mini-Adventure #5

“Heresy of the Hookah Priestess”

Written by Mark Taormino

A “DELUXE EDITION” MODULE FOR 1E & 5E CHARACTER LEVELS 1-3



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**DELUXE
EDITION**



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AUTHORS NOTE:

The **Spider Queen's** web continues to expand. One evening, after a long, grueling, backbreaking day of **hack** module writing at my computer desk, I closed my eyes and quickly drifted into a strange dream. I found myself deep within a jungle shrine. I felt a sharp sting on my wrist and looked down to find a golden spider disappearing into the darkness. Before I could react, a mysterious, beautiful, and voluptuous priestess with long flowing luxurious black hair—almost butt naked, wearing only a skimpy green plant-laden bikini—emerged barefoot from the shadows carrying an ornate obsidian hookah. Our eyes locked like a tractor beam as she beckoned by blowing me a kiss. **Against my better judgment, I accepted immediately of course... Within like a microsecond, my friends. I know all of YOU would certainly would have better restraint than me, but I digress!** The smoke was cool and sweet. My thoughts became unnaturally clear. Images flooded my mind: her beautiful eyes... a miracle in chains... her beautiful face... golden eggs... her beautiful figure... iron shackles... and yes, those beautiful boobs. Hubba hubba! The priestess smelled incredible with an irresistible perfume. One thing led to another, and nature took its course. Before long, I found myself thoroughly distracted. Wearing only my birthday suit? WTF? **Mind, body, and soul, we became one. Funny... only a minute seemed to have passed and she was gone.** The shrine and jungle had vanished. I was alone at my desk staring at an email and a blinking cursor with a title echoing in my head: **Heresy of the Hookah Priestess.** At that point, I said to myself, **"Son of a—! It was bad enough being the first entry in Lady Belladora's Book of Lace and now this?"** (SEE: **Dark Wizard Games - Final Encounters #5: Mistress of the Parlor of Leather and Lace**). Yet another beautiful woman led me to sin. Oh well, all I can say is **"Oopsie!"** The rest of the adventure practically wrote itself. Whether it was merely a dream, the lingering effects of an overactive imagination or that I had smoked too much **Highbottom Leaf** that day one cannot say. What I do know is that by the end of the day, **Melindra**, the **Golden Brood**, and the web-choked shrine all had a life of their own. I hope you enjoy unraveling this particular thread. — **Mark Taormino Dark Wizard Games™**

GM NOTES:

This is a deadly dungeon-crawl adventure set within a hidden jungle shrine where a sacred **Golden Brood** hangs in chains. Once sent by the **Spider Queen** as a living covenant to her faithful, the holy emissary has been enslaved by **Melindra**, the **Hookah Priestess**, and forced to produce offspring whose venom is

harvested, dried, and burned within ornate hookahs of obsidian and bone. The player characters must infiltrate the web-choked sanctuary, survive its traps, fanatical cultists, venomous guardians, and sinister rituals, then shatter the chains and put an end to Melindra's growing dominion. This adventure focuses on exploration, thematic encounters, deadly traps, memorable villains, and a climactic confrontation with the Hookah Priestess and her followers. It is designed for 4-6 characters of levels 1-3 and can be run as a stand-alone adventure or incorporated into an existing campaign. **A balanced party consisting of Fighters, Clerics, Magic Users and a couple low-down-and-dirty Thieves/Rogues is recommended.** You should feel free to adjust the party composition, encounter difficulty, and place names to better suit your own game world. Monster encounters provide compact inline stat blocks containing only combat-relevant information. Special abilities and unique actions are listed separately when applicable. Not every entry includes every statistic, as some values are irrelevant for certain creatures. Abbreviations used throughout the adventure include: **AC (Armor Class)**, **MV (Movement)**, **HD (Hit Dice)**, **HP (Hit Points)**, **SA (Special Attacks)**, **SD (Special Defenses)**, **AT/#AT (Number of Attacks)**, **D/DM (Damage)**, **SZ (Size)**, **AL (Alignment)**, **XP (Experience Points, 1E)**, **CR (Challenge Rating, 5E)**, **ST/DX/CN/IQ/WS/CH (Ability Scores and Modifiers)**, **SV (Saving Throw Bonuses)**, **SK (Skills)**, **SN (Senses; PP is Passive Perception)**, and **TH (To Hit Bonus)**. Standard weapon properties are omitted unless relevant. Unless otherwise noted, all creatures with natural attacks have a melee reach of 5 feet. Also check the SRD for extra statistics and info.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY:

The heroes are hired by concerned locals who have grown fearful of a strange cult operating from an ancient jungle shrine. Led by **Melindra, the Hookah Priestess**, the cult distributes a mysterious substance known as **Covenant Smoke**, a narcotic created from the harvested venom of the sacred **Golden Brood**. Those who inhale the smoke become calm, compliant, and increasingly devoted to Melindra's teachings. Villagers have begun disappearing, local leaders have fallen under her influence, and rumors suggest her power grows stronger with each passing day. To stop the threat, the adventurers must journey into the jungle, locate the hidden shrine, and infiltrate its web-choked halls. Along the way they will encounter cultists, venom-addled devotees, giant arachnids, deadly traps, and guardians loyal to Melindra's cause. As they explore the complex, the heroes will gradually discover the horrifying truth behind **Covenant Smoke** and the suffering of the sacred **Golden Brood**. Success requires more than simply killing monsters and collecting treasure. To

achieve victory, the party must locate the imprisoned Golden Brood, survive the dangers of the shrine, confront Melindra and her inner circle, and ultimately shatter the heavy iron chains binding the sacred creature. If Melindra is slain but the Golden Brood remains imprisoned, the cult may eventually reform under new leadership. Likewise, freeing the creature while allowing Melindra to escape leaves the region vulnerable to future corruption. The ideal conclusion occurs when the heroes defeat or capture Melindra, destroy the shrine's venom-harvesting operation, and free the Golden Brood from captivity. Once liberated, the sacred emissary retreats into the jungle, ending the production of Covenant Smoke and breaking the hold of the Hookah Priestess over her followers. The surviving cultists scatter, the missing villagers can be rescued, and the region slowly begins to recover from the effects of perfumed obedience. Should the heroes fail, Melindra's influence continues to spread. More settlements fall under her control, more victims disappear into the jungle, and the dominion of the Hookah Priestess grows stronger with each passing season.

ORIGIN OF MELINDRA, THE HOOKAH PRIESTESS:

Long before she became known as the **Hookah Priestess, Melindra** was a devoted acolyte of the **Order of the Eight Eyes (SEE: Maximum Mayhem Dungeons #14: Forgotten City of the Spider Goddess)**. Born in a remote jungle settlement, she grew up listening to stories of the **Spider Queen**, the sacred web of fate, and the divine judgment that awaited all souls. Unlike many of her peers, Melindra was neither cruel nor ambitious. She was curious. She asked questions. She wanted to understand why the Spider Queen demanded devotion and what purpose suffering truly served. As a young woman, Melindra entered the priesthood and quickly gained a reputation for her intelligence and charm and even started mimicking the nature plant bikini dress and style of her leader **Vexira of the Velvet Web**. While other priestesses focused on sacrifice and ritual, Melindra became fascinated with the minds of the faithful. She wanted to know why people obeyed, what inspired loyalty, and how belief itself could shape the world with a cult of personality. Years passed, and Melindra traveled between shrines carrying messages and performing sacred rites. During these journeys she witnessed greed, corruption, and hypocrisy among both nobles and priests. Many who spoke loudly of faith secretly cared only for power. The discovery left her disappointed and increasingly cynical. Though she remained outwardly loyal to the Spider Queen, a seed of doubt had taken root. Melindra began to wonder whether faith was truly sacred or simply another form of control. By the time she reached adulthood, she had become one of the most respected priestesses



in her region. Beneath her calm demeanor lurked a growing dissatisfaction with the very faith she served. It was this dissatisfaction that eventually led her down the path of heresy.

THE GIFT OF THE GOLDEN BROOD:

Many years after the rise of **Vexira of the Velvet Web**, strange omens appeared throughout the jungle. Golden spiders were seen spinning radiant webs between ancient trees. Priests reported vivid dreams of silk-covered stars and a voice whispering from beyond the veil. The **Spider Queen** had chosen to send a sacred emissary into the mortal world—a miraculous creature later known as the Golden Brood. Unlike ordinary arachnids, the creature possessed gleaming golden chitin and intelligence far beyond that of any beast. It was viewed as a living covenant between the Spider Queen and her faithful. Melindra was among the priestesses chosen to accompany the pilgrimage that discovered the **Golden Brood's** resting place. Hidden deep within an ancient shrine, the creature appeared exactly as described in the visions. Many fell to their knees in worship. The priesthood declared the shrine holy ground and charged Melindra with helping

