The realm of the Gaping Maw and the Screaming Jungle, reflecting the schizophrenic ferocity of its master

Mirroring its demon lord’s dual nature, Abysm is a realm divided. Its most prominent feature is a primeval forest dotted by impenetrable swamps—the Screaming Jungle, 90th layer of the Abyss. At Abysm’s heart lies the 88th layer of the Gaping Maw—an inland sea whose black waters descend for miles. Overhead stretches a roiling olive sky of thick clouds and alien moons. All creatures here bow down before the might of Demogorgon, the Sibilant Beast and Prince of Demons. Even the unknowable Dagon, who lurks in the depths of the Shadowsea, makes no challenge to Demogorgon’s control of this realm.

History
A little over a century ago, Demogorgon executed a plan to unleash a savage tide of chaos and death across the mortal world. Had his plot succeeded, the Prince of Demons would have undergone an apotheosis, transforming himself into something akin to a god. Demogorgon’s plans were ultimately foiled by a party of mortal heroes. With a host of archfey and rival demon lords, the heroes led an invasion into Abysm and slew Demogorgon in a desperate final battle. Though numerous other demon lords had long coveted the mantle of Prince of Demons, the mortal who struck the killing blow claimed that title in the end.

Like Obox-ob and Orcus before him, Demogorgon did not remain dead for long. Spontaneously reformed by the power of the Abyss, the resurgent demon lord quickly set out to reclaim his throne. As he always had, the demon lord Dagon once more gave Demogorgon his aid, claiming only the mortal usurper’s life in payment.

FROM THE DEMONOMICON OF IGGWILV
Dagon’s endgame remains as mysterious and inescutable as ever. I have no doubt that the Lord of the Darkened Depths could have easily claimed Abysm in Demogorgon’s absence, yet he did not. In the end, Dagon’s reasons might have simply mirrored my own. Many perils are associated with becoming Prince of Demons. Better to manipulate events from the shadows than stand in the open and draw fire to yourself.

The Gaping Maw

**GAPING MAW TRAITS**
- **Type:** Abyssal layer.
- **Size and Shape:** Inland sea approximately one hundred miles across and twenty miles deep (including the Shadowsea); bounded.
- **Gravity:** Normal.
- **Mutability:** Abyssal mutability. (Demon lords and other powers are able to influence their surroundings.)

Referred to as Dagon’s Maw in the most ancient texts, the Gaping Maw (88th layer of the Abyss) is a turbulent sea broken by rocky promontories used as rookeries by flying demons. Innumerable streams and two large rivers feed the sea. The Indigo Wash bubbles up from the depths of the Screaming Jungle, while the ubiquitous Blood River courses down from the heights of the Blood Rift. The waters of the Gaping Maw are unlike any known to mortal mariners. Every part of this sea, from the pounding surf to the denizens of the depths, carries a dark malevolence. A great whirlpool called the Stygian Eye swirls about the base of the Abysm Fortress.

The Screaming Jungle

**SCREAMING JUNGLE TRAITS**
- **Type:** Abyssal layer.
- **Size and Shape:** Jungle continent; unbounded.
- **Gravity:** Normal.
- **Mutability:** Abyssal mutability. (Demon lords and other powers are able to influence their surroundings.)
- **Corruption:** Attacks that have the disease or poison keyword gain a +1 bonus to the attack roll. Healing powers restore only half as many hit points as normal.

A primeval dark continent covered in dense rainforest, the Screaming Jungle is named for the constant keening of its fiendish wildlife. Near the coast of the Gaping Maw, the jungle thins into a fetid bog. Farther
The ground hardens and the canopy grows dangerously lush. Malevolent flora and fauna abound here, lurking beneath a forest canopy so thick that the jungle floor is perpetually cloaked in darkness. This 90th layer of the Abyss is home to the most feral of Demogorgon’s servitors, exemplifying his aspect as a force of primal strength and brutality.

**Features and Terrain**
The twin layers of Demogorgon’s realm offer explorers and adventurers any number of ways to die.

**Hazards of the Jungle**
The festering landscape of the Screaming Jungle features many hazards familiar to worldly explorers. But even familiar hazards become more deadly in the realm of Demogorgon. Characters who stumble into spiderwebs and grasping slime (see *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, pages 68–69) or a grasping bog (see *Dungeon Master’s Guide* 2, page 60) find their momentum slowed—and alert nearby creatures to their presence as they struggle to extract themselves. Demon jags, acidic mire, and wrath mud (see *The Plane Below: Secrets of the Elemental Chaos*, pages 12–13) impede a party’s progress and can kill characters who stumble into them.

**Plants and Insects**
The plant life of the jungle includes razorvine (see *Manual of the Planes*, page 22) and grab grass (see *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, page 68). Blood midge clouds (see *Dungeon Master’s Guide* 2, page 58) and other insect swarms can slow a party’s progress and provide cover for lurking monsters. Such creatures likewise take advantage of the cover provided by clouds of infectious pallor (see *The Plane Below: Secrets of the Elemental Chaos*, page 16) and other airborne hazards.

**The Gaping Maw**
Where the Blood River pours into the Gaping Maw, it creates a powerful tidal current that drags any creatures caught in it out toward the Stygian Eye. This colossal swirling maelstrom drains the Gaping Maw into the Blood Sea (see the sidebar). The skies above the Gaping Maw roll with incredible storms, relentlessly blazing the region with driving rains and hurricane-force winds.

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**Scalepox Cloud**
Native to both layers of Abyss, a scalepox cloud is a gray mist that drifts of its own accord even against strong winds. Demogorgon concocted this plague, using it to infect and convert enemies that infiltrate his domain. A scalepox cloud covers an area from 3 to 5 squares on a side.

**Effect:** When a creature not loyal to Demogorgon is hit by an attack while in a scalepox cloud, the creature is exposed to screaming scalepox. Squares containing a scalepox cloud are lightly obscured.

**Usage:** Scalepox clouds drift throughout both layers of Abyss, and add an extra layer of danger to any combat encounter in Demogorgon’s realm.

**Locations**
The untamed chaos of Abyss conceals a number of lethal sites.

**Abysm Fortress**
Near the Stygian Eye that swirls at the center of the Gaping Maw, twin serpentine towers rise out of the inky depths. The fearsome fortress of Abyss serves as Demogorgon’s palace and personal sanctuary, and gives his realm its name. Here, the Prince of Demons labors to unlock abyssal secrets that are ancient even by his reckoning. The palace rises a few hundred feet above the roiling sea, but the bulk of its structure extends impossibly deep, down through the Gaping Maw and penetrating the floor of the Shadowsea (page 70). Its spiraling towers are tipped with minarets, each resembling an enormous fanged skull.

**The Brine Flats**
A shallow, brackish seabed surrounding the swampy mainland of the Screaming Jungle, the Brine Flats provides shelter from the otherwise intense tides of the Maw. Demogorgon’s favored ixitxachitls (page 119) dwell here, carving out enormous tunnel complexes in coral reefs just below the surface. The mightiest and most malevolent ixitxachitls reside in shallow tidal pools among the sunken ruins of Lemoriax (see page 70).

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**Screaming Scalepox**
Level 15 Disease

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Effect</td>
<td>The target loses a healing surge that it cannot regain until cured of the disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>+18 vs. Fortitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>Improve DC 23, maintain DC 18, worsen DC 17 or lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The target is cured.

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The target takes a -2 penalty to all defenses and loses two healing surges that it cannot regain until cured of the disease.

**Final State:** The target recovers from the effect of screaming scalepox but becomes a loyal servant of Demogorgon.
CHAUDEN GAP
Land travelers bound for the Guttering Grove (see below) pass through the Chauden Gap to avoid the dangerous slopes of the surrounding mountains. This section of low peaks remains perpetually cloaked in mist, blinding travelers to monstrous battlebriars (see Monster Manual, page 28) and other animate plants.

THE DEMONWING
Somewhere within the pinnacles of rock that dot the Gaping Maw lies the shattered hulk of Demonwing, a colossal chaos ship that once sailed throughout the cosmos. It is said that Demonwing is, in fact, an entire lost layer of the Abyss unto itself, built by an ancient prince of demons. What befell the mighty vessel remains unknown, but even the fiercest demons avoid the site of the wreck.

THE GUTTERING GROVE
The Guttering Grove is a hidden plateau of the Screaming Jungle ruled by barlguras and other demonic simians. This region was once a distinct abyssal layer, until Demogorgon invaded and merged it with his own realm centuries ago. Its deposed demon lord, Ilsidahur, still dwells here, now a faithful servant of Demogorgon.

The Guttering Grove is significant in that it holds a demongate to the Feywild, thought to be the last of the portals used by the Court of Stars (see Manual of the Planes, page 36) to invade the Abyss in eons past.

THE INDIGO WASH
This raging watercourse runs from the heart of the Screaming Jungle wends to the Gaping Maw, carving deep canyons as it goes. Its sheer gorges are honeycombed with caverns, within which dwell blood fiends (see Monster Manual, page 12). The deepest tunnels are thought to connect with the Sibilant Deeps (see below). Despite its bizarre coloration, the waters of the Indigo Wash are safe to drink.

LEMORIAX
Once a thriving metropolis of towering ziggurats and broad avenues teeming with thousands of demonic syphons, Lemoriax fell into ruin a century ago. Constant tidal erosion has eaten away at Lemoriax’s foundations, leaving it underwater in the salty shallows of the Brine Flats. Though the city’s tallest towers still jut up above the waves, only aquatic ixitxachitls (page 119), sahuagins, and water archons dwell there now.

Since the fall of Lemoriax, Demogorgon has made no move to establish another city or trade center in his realm. Nonetheless, cultists and thralls of Demogorgon revere the sunken city as a holy site, undertaking dangerous pilgrimages there to make offerings or conduct sacrifices in their lord’s name.

THE SHADOWSEA
Descend deep enough into the brackish depths of the Gaping Maw and one eventually passes into the Shadowsea. This region is coterminous with the Maw but is its own abyssal layer (the 89th), controlled by the inscrutable demon lord Dagon, Prince of the Darkened Depths (see Monster Manual 2, page 45).

The Shadowsea is a tortured undersea landscape of jagged mountains and abyssal trenches. No light penetrates these waters, which teem with oozes able to withstand the immense pressures of the deep. Necroclasm clouds (see below) are among the several hazards of the Shadowsea.

Many sunken cities can be found here—ancient ruins in which dwell kuo-toas (see Monster Manual, page 172) and aboleths (see Monster Manual, page 8) bound in service to Dagon. The largest of these cities is the demesne of the demon lord. Dagon’s amorphous mud palace looms over a madness-inducing panorama of twisted towers, yawning gulfs, and halls and grottos that shimmer with their own unearthly light.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Necroclasm Cloud</th>
<th>Level 20 Obstacle</th>
<th>Hazard XP 500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The illumination you bring to these lightless depths is suddenly swallowed by a roiling cloud of absolute darkness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard:</td>
<td></td>
<td>The necroclasm cloud fills an area 4 squares on a side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td></td>
<td>♦ DC 27: The character notices the exceptional darkness in the water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trigger</td>
<td></td>
<td>The necroclasm cloud attacks when a creature enters any of its squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td></td>
<td>Immediate Interrupt Melee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target:</td>
<td></td>
<td>The triggering creature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit:</td>
<td></td>
<td>+23 vs. Fortitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack:</td>
<td></td>
<td>2d8 + 6 necrotic damage, the target is blinded and takes ongoing 15 necrotic damage, and the necroclasm cloud shrinks from its space to occupy the target’s square (save ends all). When the target saves, the cloud expands in a close burst 4 from the target’s square.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SHATIK PEAKS
Two great volcanic mountains rise from the dense reaches of the Screaming Jungle. One spews forth billowing smoke and ash between infrequent but violent magma eruptions. The second peak is more active, erupting in torrents of superheated water and steam. The Shatik Peaks are each home to a faction of warling troglodytes dwelling in subterranean complexes.

THE SIBILANT DEEPS
Scattered sinkholes throughout the Screaming Jungle lead into the Sibilant Deeps, an immense subterranean realm inhabited by elementals and tribes of marauding demons. Creatures falling into a sinkhole drop fifty feet or more down a vertical shaft before hitting bottom.
**The Tor of Fangs**

Close by the Indigo Wash, the Tor of Fangs is a granite pinnacle named for twin spires of petrified wood that resemble great teeth. Within the tor lies the Sanctum of Ahmon-Ibor, home to a flesh cult (see *Open Grave*, page 146) led by a death knight.

**Uami-Gubot, the Slithering Fen**

This murky swamp extends along the shores of the Gaping Maw. Though populated primarily by hydras, nagas, and snakes (see the *Monster Manual*), the Slithering Fen takes its name from its most fearsome inhabitant. Uami-Gubot is a fiendish behir (see *Monster Manual 2*, page 22) thought to be the spawn of Demogorgon. This behir rules over a tribe of lizardfolk called the goro, distinctive for the tentaclelike arms granted to them for their faith in Demogorgon.

**Ungorth Reddik**

Once a tall tower marking the gateway to the city of Lemoriax, the fortress of Ungorth Reddik now juts from the waters of the Brine Flats. The fortress crawls with retrievers (see *Monster Manual 2*, page 177), golems, and constructs not seen elsewhere.

**Inhabitants**

The two layers of Abysm teem with life—all of it as deadly as this realm’s master. The creatures of the Screaming Jungle exemplify Demogorgon’s aspect of primal strength and brutality. Behemoths (see *Monster Manual*, page 31) battle for territory against dire apes and barlguras, while hundreds of thousands of demons lurk in ruined fortresses, ready to fight at Demogorgon’s whim. The uncharted expanses of the jungle are populated by dinosaurs, fiendish troglodytes, drakkoths (see *Monster Manual 2*, page 90), hezrou demons, and the cults of the yuan-ti.

Aquatic demons and chaotic elementals are the natural inhabitants of the Gaping Maw, though fiendish sharks and other sea monsters found in the natural world also swim these waters. But, of all the creatures of Abysm, the most terrifying are the abominations that Demogorgon takes a hand in creating. The Prince of Demons is a master of the art of shaping demonic life—secrets thought to have been stolen from the obyrith lords.