



AMERICAN MONSTER HUNTERS

a cooperative card game

by Mike Addison © 2016

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In the small towns and lonely highways of America, monsters lurk in the shadows, stalking and terrorizing innocent victims. You are a small team of monster hunters — average citizens that know the truth about the creatures of the night. You are on the hunt for an unknown monster. Can you identify the monster and track it to its lair before it claims its victims and disappears once more into the shadows?

HUGE THANKS TO:

Sarah, my co-designer in life.

Donna Davies, for always saying YES!

BG Playtesters: Joseph Bak-Coleman, Legend Montgomery,
Scott Withrow, Ryan Stram, Alex Nader

Cleveland Playtesters: Kevin and Lori Somerville

Portland Playtesters: Wil Peregrine and Roman Nolan

Cabin-Con Playtesters: Andy Agin, William Carey, Earl Tietsort

Archbold Playtesters: Ian Moss, Jim Schoch, Jon Gilmour, Curtis Clark, Travis Magrum,
Dan (I don't know your last name!), and apologies if I missed anyone!

All the great people and playtesters at Unpub!

AND YOU!

for taking the time to read and play the game. :)

Objective

Use clues to **reveal the mystery** -- the traits and lair location of the monster stalking the town. Then **build weapons** and **slay** the monster before it claims **8 victims**.

Set-up

The Town

Shuffle the **location cards** , then place four face up in a horizontal row across the table. Return the rest to the box.

The Mystery

Split the **mystery cards**  into four groups: **A**(pppearance), **B**(ehavior), **C**(orpses), and **Lair**.

Shuffle each group and place one card from each group into a facedown **mystery pile**. Shuffle the mystery pile, then place one card from that pile facedown above each location card on the table. Return the remaining mystery cards to the box without looking at them.

Note: You want the mystery cards used in your game to remain secret at the start of the game, so make sure you don't look at either the cards used or the ones returned to the box.

Danger Deck

Separate the danger deck  cards into victims, monster attacks, and events. Create two piles. Each pile gets 6 victims, 4 attacks, and 3 randomly chosen events. Shuffle each pile separately, then place one on top of the other. This forms the **danger deck**. Place the danger deck to the left of the location cards, and return the extra event cards to the box.

Clue Deck

Shuffle the **clue deck**  and place it to the right of the location cards.

Hunters

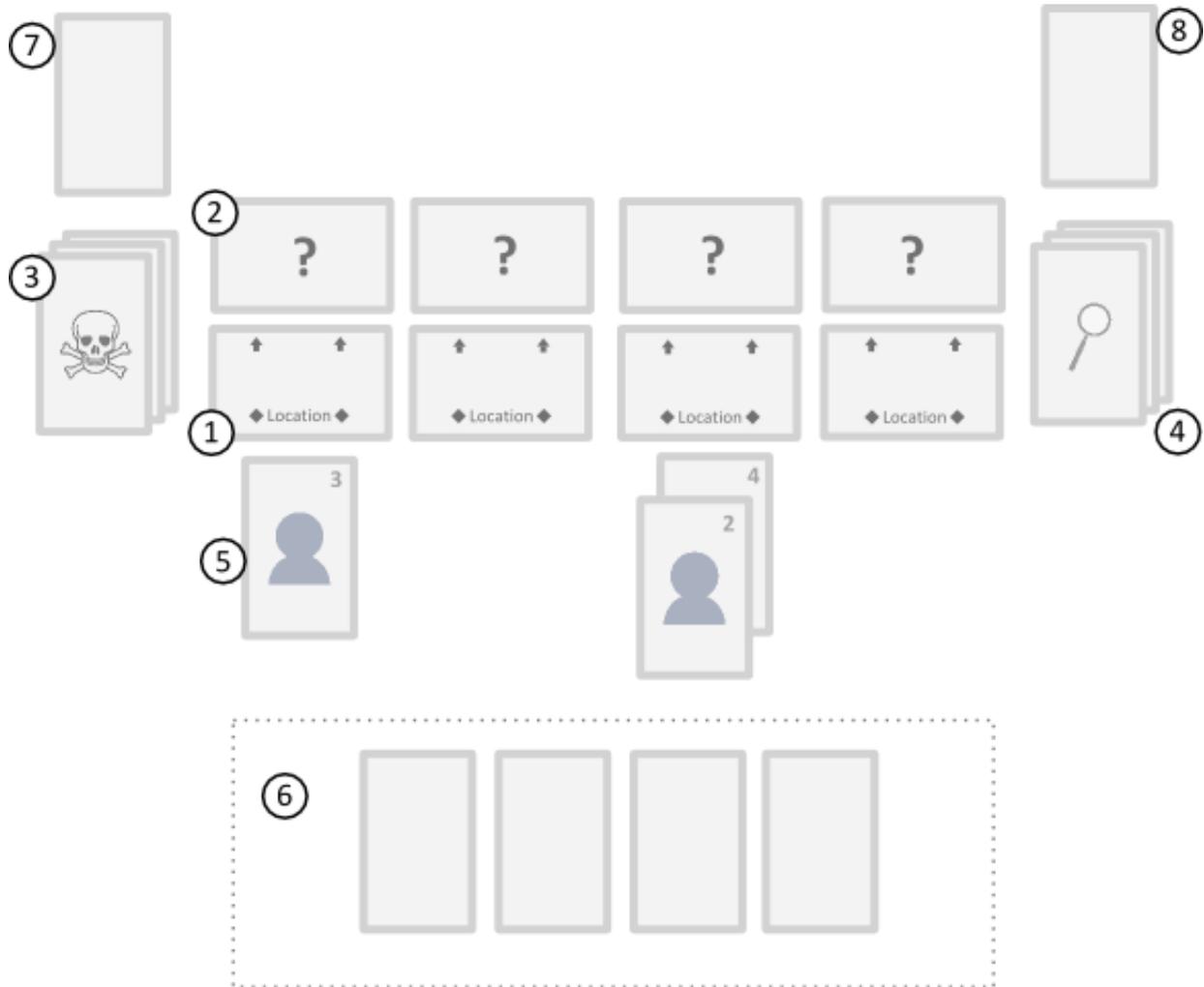
Deal two **hunter cards** to each player. Each player chooses one of the hunters they were dealt to play, and flips the other facedown to use as a **+** track. Only the  should be showing. Deal **3 clue cards** to each player.

The Trunk

Leave space below the location cards to play clue cards into the **Trunk** of your hunters' vehicle.

The player with the lowest numbered hunter card goes first.

Game Layout



① **location** cards

② **mystery** cards

③ **danger** deck

④ **clue** deck

⑤ victims (empty at start of game)

⑥ **The Trunk** (empty at start of game)

⑦ danger deck discard

⑧ clue deck discard

Play

A game is played in two stages, Investigate and Hunt. Both stages are played in **turns**.

Investigate stage

During the **Investigate stage**, do the following on your turn, in order:

- 1) **Bad Stuff** - draw the **top card** from the danger deck and play it.
- 2) **Good Stuff** - do **one** of the following actions:
 - **Search** - choose a location and draw 3 clue cards. Keep cards that match suits on the location.
 - **Question** - choose a victim, draw and keep cards equal to their risk value, then turn the victim.
 - **Stow** - add any number of cards from your hand into the Trunk.
 - **Reveal Mystery** - play a set of cards to flip over a facedown mystery card.

Then, after any action you may do the following once:

- **Build Weapon** - play a set of cards to build a weapon in your hand and equip it on one hunter.

- 3) **Discard** - discard your hand down to 5 cards

Hunt stage

Once all four mystery cards have been revealed, Investigate ends and the Hunt begins.

During the **Hunt stage**, do the following on your turn, in order:

- 1) **Bad Stuff** - follow the instructions on the monster card.
- 2) **Good Stuff** - do **one** of the following actions:
 - **Search** - choose a location and draw 3 clue cards. Keep cards that match suits on the location.
 - **Question** - choose a victim, draw and keep cards equal to their risk value, then turn the victim.
 - **Stow** - add any number of cards from your hand into the Trunk.
 - **Attack** - play a set of cards to deal a wound with an equipped weapon.

Then, after any action you may do the following once:

- **Build Weapon** - play a set of cards to build a weapon in your hand and equip it on one hunter.

- 3) **Discard** - discard your hand down to 5 cards.

Bad Stuff

Danger Cards

The danger deck contains three types of cards — **victims**, **monster attacks**, and **events**.

Victims

When you draw a victim, place it below a location in play based on the color code at the bottom of the card. Victims are placed in the first location that matches a color of the code, from left to right.

Example:

◆ ◆ ◆ - Place at ◆ Harbor ◆. If ◆ Harbor ◆ is not in the town, place at ◆ Museum ◆. If ◆ Museum ◆ is not in the town, place at ◆ Old Cannery ◆.

Victims have a risk value ☠ in the upper right hand corner of the card that indicates how hard it is to protect them from monster attacks. Victims with special effects are listed below:

👤 +1 ☠ to other 👤 in this location. The risk value ☠ of other victims 👤 in the same location as this victim are treated as one higher than normal. For example, a ☠1 becomes a 2, and a ☠5 becomes a 6. The risk value for this card stays a ☠4 unless a second card with the same ability is in the same location. This effect lasts as long as this card is in play.

👤 Play a random card from the Danger Deck discard pile. Shuffle any cards in the danger deck discard pile together, then draw and play one of those cards normally, according to the normal rules. Return the other shuffled cards to the discard pile. If the discard pile contains no cards, nothing happens. This only occurs once when the victim enters play.

👤 ← Move other 👤 →. In the location where this card is to be placed, move any other victims 👤 currently in that location to another location next to it, left or right. If the targeted location is on an end, the location at the far end counts as being next to it. If there is more than one victim 👤 to move, you may move the victims 👤 to more than one location. You may choose which victims 👤 are moved to which locations. This only occurs once when the victim first enters play.

Monster Attacks ★

When you draw a monster attack, determine where it occurs using the color code on the bottom of the card. The monster attack occurs in the first location that matches a color of the code, from left to right. (Same method as victims.)

If the location contains victims, the monster **attacks the victims**. Otherwise the monster **attacks the hunters**.

Monster Attacks Victims

If the monster attacks victims, all of the victims in that location are killed unless the hunters defend them.

To **defend a victim**, any hunter may immediately play a card of any suit from their hand that has a number value **greater than or equal** to the risk value of the victim. The following rules apply to defending victims:

- only one card can be played to defend a single victim — multiple cards cannot be combined to defend one victim.
- a single hunter may play multiple cards to defend multiple victims.
- multiple hunters may play cards to defend different victims during the same attack.

Playing cards during an attack does not count as an action for any hunter — attacks are a special opportunity to play cards. Cards played to defend are placed in their deck's discard pile.

Example:

It is Donna's turn, and the **♦ Old Cannery ♦** is attacked. It contains three victims, with risk values of ☠1, ☠3, ☠4. Joe plays a 1 to defend the ☠1 and Donna plays a 3 and a 5 to defend the ☠3 and ☠4, respectively.

An attack can end in two ways, as follows:

If all of the victims are defended, the monster attack is defeated and the player that drew the attack card puts the defeated attack card **in their hand**. Defeated monster attack cards function like a **wild card** of the suit depicted on the card. They can be played as a clue card of that suit of any number value — 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

Otherwise, any victims that were not defended are **killed** and removed from the town. Keep killed victims in a separate pile above the mystery cards to keep track of how many have been killed. The monster attack card is placed at the bottom of the danger deck, and can be drawn again later in the game.

Example:

Joe and Donna defended all of the victims, so Donna adds the attack card to her hand. If Donna could not play the 5 from her hand, the ☠4 victim would have been killed, and the attack card would go to the bottom of the danger deck.

In either case, **defended victims are left at the location**, and can be targeted by future attacks.

Monster Attacks Hunters

If the monster attacks the hunters, each hunter must immediately **discard a card** from their hand, of any suit or value. Any hunter that cannot discard a card takes a **wound +**, and slides their hunter card down to reveal the next wound on their **+** track.

Example:

Joe draws an attack card on his turn for the  Harbor . The location contains no victims, so Joe and Donna must each discard a card. Joe discards a 2 from his hand. Donna currently has no cards in her hand, so she takes a wound .

If all hunters discard a card, then the attack is defeated and the player that drew the attack card puts the defeated attack card **in their hand**, to be used as a wild card.

Otherwise, the attack card is placed at the bottom of the danger deck.

Discarded cards are placed in their deck's discard pile.

Events !

When you draw an event, immediately do the effect on the card. Then place it in the discard pile for the danger deck. There are 12 event cards in the basic game, listed below. "You" refers to the player that drew the card.

Strange Fog — You choose to immediately discard one card from your hand or flip over and resolve the next card from the Danger Deck .

Cat Scare — Nothing happens. It's just a cat.

Feds — Place the Feds card in the Trunk. Hunters may not play cards into the Trunk (as a Stow or the Driver's special ability) or use cards from the Trunk during their turn. If a hunter plays a set adding up to 9 during their turn, the Feds card is discarded and the effect ends.

Festival — Immediately move the most recently placed victim from each location in town to the location indicated by the color code   .

Funeral — Immediately move the most recently placed from each location in town to the location indicated by the color code   .

On-going Events:

Like victims and monster attacks, ongoing events are played on a location based on the color-code at the bottom of the card. An ongoing event remains in play until a hunter discards it. While in play, the event adds an effect that occurs whenever a monster attack occurs. To discard an ongoing event, a hunter must play a set equal to the Discard value on the card. The event card is then discarded, and the current player collects the reward listed on the card. A hunter may play a set to discard an event at any time on their turn. This does not count as an action.

Each ongoing event has an effect, as follows:

Hellhound – When a monster attack occurs in any location, the hunters must also defend the victim with the highest risk value in the Hellhound’s location. If this victim is not defended, the victim is killed and the attack is not defeated. If there are no victims in the Hellhound’s location, nothing happens.

Poltergeist – When a monster attack occurs in the Poltergeist’s location, any hunter that wishes to play cards to defend victims must first take one wound . Otherwise, that hunter may not play any cards to defend victims during the monster attack.

Power Outage – When a monster attack occurs in the Power Outage’s location, any hunter that wishes to play cards to defend victims must first discard 1 card from their hand. Otherwise, that hunter may not play any cards to defend victims during the monster attack.

Cursed Roads – When a monster attack occurs in the Cursed Roads location, the current player must move one victim of their choice from any other location to the Cursed Roads location before resolving the monster attack. After the victim is moved, resolve the monster attack as normal. The moved victim is targeted by the monster attack along with any other victims in the location.

Monster Bad Stuff

During the Hunt stage, hunters no longer draw a card from the Danger Deck as their Bad Stuff. Instead, the hunter suffers one of the Bad Stuff effects from the monster’s card. Do the first effect that you can, from left to right. If you can do an effect, you must do. You may not choose to do a different effect further to the right instead.

Monster card Bad Stuff works as follows:

  /  /  /  - Play a card with the symbol listed next to the monster card.

 - Your hunter takes a wound.

 - One victim in town is killed.

 - One victim in town is moved to the discard pile.

 :  - If you have any cards of the suit depicted in your hand, do the effect listed.

Werewolf - When it is your turn, reveal any  cards from your hand. For each  you reveal, you must kill one victim in town. The revealed  cards remain in your hand.

Good Stuff

Search

When you search, choose one of the four locations in play. Draw 3 cards from the clue deck and look at them. Keep all of the cards you drew that match the search suits listed on the location (right side of the card next to the 🔍 symbol). Discard the remaining cards.

Question

When you question, choose a victim at one of the four locations in play. Draw a number of cards from the clue deck equal to the risk value ☠️ of the victim. Then turn the victim card sideways to indicate that they have been questioned. The higher risk value printed on the side of the card is the victim's new risk value. Some victims have a symbol printed next to their higher risk value. If one of these victims dies, the additional effect occurs according to the symbol:

⊕ - current player takes a wound.

✖️ - current player discards one card.

Each victim can only be questioned once. If a victim has been turned sideways, they cannot be questioned again.

Stow

When you stow cards in the Trunk as your action, place **one or more cards** from your hand into the Trunk. The Trunk is a space on the table to store cards that **all hunters share**. The Trunk can hold **any number of cards** — there is no limit to how many cards can be added to it. You may stow both **clue cards and defeated monster attack cards** from your hand.

How to use the Trunk

On your turn, you may play cards from the Trunk **as if they were part of your hand**. The following rules apply to the Trunk:

- You may only play cards from the Trunk if it is **your turn**, not on other players' turns.
- Cards can be played from the Trunk as part of a set, to defend victims during a monster attack, or as a discard when required.
- Playing cards from the Trunk is **optional**. If you are required to play or discard a card, you do not have to use cards from the Trunk to do so.
- Cards in the Trunk do not count as part of your hand for Monster Bad Stuff that depends on cards of a particular suit in your hand.

Note that even during an attack or other event that requires a discard, only the player **currently taking a turn** may play cards from the Trunk.

Reveal Mystery

To progress the game to the Hunt, the hunters must reveal all four mystery cards. To reveal a mystery, play a set of cards from your hand matching the **symbols on the location card** below the mystery card, then flip the mystery card face up. The cards you play can be any number value. You just need to match the symbols shown.

Example:

The  Woods  has an unrevealed mystery card above it. On her turn, Donna plays four  cards from her hand to match the symbols on the  Woods ,    . She then flips over the mystery card ? above it, revealing the monster trait, Looks Human .

When you reveal a mystery card, **immediately resolve the effect** on the mystery card. See the FAQs for more details on mystery card effects.

Each mystery card reveals either a weakness of the monster (A,B,C) or the location of the monster's Lair. Weaknesses and Lair determine which weapons are needed to wound the monster.

Lair

The Lair card adds an addition requirement needed to defeat the monster, as follows:

- A x2** - you must deal two wounds of the weakness symbol on the A mystery card.
- B x2** - you must deal two wounds of the weakness symbol on the B mystery card.
- C x2** - you must deal two wounds of the weakness symbol on the C mystery card.
- 2**  - you must deal two wounds with weapons that have the Close symbol .
- 2**  - you must deal two wounds with weapons that have the Ranged symbol .
- +** - one hunter must take a wound on their turn to deal a wound to the monster.

Build Weapon

To build a weapon, play a set of cards whose combined number value exactly matches the number **cost** on a weapon card in your hand. Only the number value of the cards you play matter. The cards may be of any suit. You may then **equip** the weapon to any hunter by placing the weapon on the table next to a player's hunter card. Each hunter may only have one weapon of each type (Ranged and Close) equipped at any time. A hunter may discard an equipped weapon in order to equip another weapon when it is built.

Example:

Joe decides to build the Rocksalt Shotgun. It has a build cost of 9. He plays 2, 3, and 4 from his hand, for a total of 9, then places the Rocksalt Shotgun next to his hunter card.

Attack

During the Hunt stage, you may wound the monster with any weapon in the Trunk.

To wound the monster, play a set of cards that match the symbols depicted in the center of a weapon card equipped to your hunter. Then place **monster wounds** (reverse side of monster cards) over any mystery card whose weakness or condition (in the case of the Lair) is satisfied by the weapon.

The monster is destroyed once it has taken four wounds -- one for each mystery card.

Example:

The villain has been revealed: it's a Vampire (Looks Human , Feeds on Victims , Bodies Drained ). It's Lair is a Nest (2 ). Donna and Joe have built the following weapons:

-  Rocksalt Shotgun      
-  Holy Crossbow      
-  Petrol Bomb    

On Donna's turn, she uses her action to use the Holy Crossbow. She plays three  from her hand, and places a monster wound on both Bodies Drained and Looks Human. Only one  weapon has been used so far. If Donna or Joe use another  weapon, they would mark a wound on Nest in addition to any other weaknesses affected.

The following additional rules apply to using weapons:

- Each weapon can only be used once to wound the monster. **Discard a weapon after you attack with it.**
- You may attack with weapons that have symbols you don't need in order to match weaknesses or conditions you do need.
- You do not need to attack with all of the weapons you build — sometimes you may accidentally build a weapon you don't need!

Discard

At the end of the turn, discard your hand down to **5 cards**. During your turn, you may hold more than 5 cards, but you must discard down to 5 cards at the end of your turn.

End of the Game

Winning the Game

The **hunters win** the game if they successfully deal four wounds to the monster.

The **hunters lose** the game if one of the following occurs:

- 8 or more victims die.
- one hunter reaches the ☠ on their + track.
- the danger deck is empty at the start of a player's turn.
- the additional **lose when** condition on the monster card is fulfilled.

Print and Play tips:

If you are planning to sleeve your Print-and-Play version of the cards, please note that the cards are slightly large for standard sized euro card sleeves. You can either trim down the long edges of the cards, or use larger sleeve protectors.

If you play American Monster Hunters, please take a few minutes and fill out the playtest questionnaire found here:



<http://nerdypugames.com/amh>

If you found us through Unpub, you can also fill out feedback through the Unpub site. Your feedback is incredibly vital to making AMH a complete game, so please tell us what you think!

Thanks!

Mike Addison
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FAQs

Victims

[V1] When placing victims or attacks, what if more than one color in the color code is in the town?

Always place in the leftmost color on the victim/attack card that matches a location in play.

[V2] Can a location hold more than one victim?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of victims in one location. If a victim should be placed in a location that already contains another victim, then it is placed there. Both victims (and any subsequently placed victims) will be targeted by any attacks or other cards that target that location.

Attacks

[A1] Can I defend more than one victim during an attack?

Yes.

[A2] Can I play two or more cards together to defend a victim?

No. You must play a single card for each victim you defend.

[A3] Where do defeated Attack cards that are played/discarded from my hand go?

Place them in the discard pile for the danger deck, not the clue deck discard pile.

[A4] Do I remove victims from a location if I successfully defend them from an attack?

No. Victims stay in a location after being defended, and may be the target of another attack later in the game.

[A5] What does the * (etc.) mean at the top of the Attack card?

If you defeat an Attack card, the active player puts the Attack card in their hand, and may use that card as any number (*) of the suit shown on the card.

The Trunk

[T1] Can I Stow a defeated Attack card in my hand into the Trunk?

Yes! Sharing is caring.

[T2] Is there a limit to the number of cards I can Stow in the Trunk as one action? Is there a limit to the number of cards the Trunk can hold?

You may place as many cards from your hand into the Trunk as you wish. The Trunk can hold any number of cards.

[T3] If there is a matching card in the Trunk and the monster card Bad Stuff requires me to discard a specific card (🔥, 🗑️, etc.) do I have to play it?

No. You may choose whether or not you use a card in the Trunk for monster card Bad Stuff. Cards in the Trunk *may* be used like cards from your hand, but do not *have* to be treated as part of your hand.

Resolve

[R1] Can I play only part of a set as a Reveal/Build/Attack action?

No. You must play the full set as a single action in order to Reveal/Build/Attack.

[R2] Can I give someone cards from my hand to help complete a set?

No. You must Stow cards into the Trunk in order for another player to use them.

[R3] Can I use a combination of cards from the Trunk and cards from my hand?

Yes. Cards in the Trunk may be played as if they are cards in your hand. But remember, you can **ONLY** play cards from the Trunk if it is your turn.

Order of Play

[P1] Can I do X action and do something else?

You may only do one Good Stuff action per turn. But you always get to Build once per turn in addition to your Good Stuff action.

[P2] When several cards are played or discarded at once, does the order matter?

The order matters if someone is playing the Garbage Collector. The players may decide in what order cards played as a set or multiple cards played to defend victims during a single attack are placed in their respective discard piles.

[P3] What happens to event cards that have been revealed from the danger deck?

They go to the discard pile for the danger deck.

Weapons

[W1] When I build a weapon, can I play cards whose total is greater than the cost of the weapon?

No. The cards you play must add up exactly to the cost of the weapon, usually 9.

[W2] When can I build weapons?

You may build weapons on any turn, regardless how many mystery cards have been revealed. Building weapons based on weaknesses you have already revealed is a good idea, but you may guess and build weapons for weaknesses that have not yet been revealed. You may even build weapons after the monster has been revealed, but keep in mind that time is often limited once the monster's Bad Stuff is in play.

[W3] When can I Attack with weapons?

You may only use Attack in the Hunt stage, after all four mystery cards have been revealed.

[W4] Can I Attack with more than one weapon in a single turn?

No. Attack counts as an action, and you can only take one action per turn.

The Monster

[M1] Is the monster revealed if all three traits are revealed, but the Lair is not?

No. You know what the monster is, but you may not Attack it unless you have found its Lair.

[M2] What happens if the monster Lose When contradicts one of the basic lose conditions?

If the monster lose condition appears to override one of the other lose conditions, both conditions still apply. For instance, if a monster card states that the hunters lose when no victims remain, the hunters would still lose if 8 victims are killed before all of the victims in play are killed. In the same example, the hunters would still lose if no victims remain even if less than 8 victims were killed.

[M3] Can the Photographer play a  in place of another suit to fulfill monster Bad Stuff?

Yes, but it counts as one card towards that monster's Lose When condition. Using the Photographer's ability is optional, so you may choose not to use it to fulfill Bad Stuff.