

The Protest

Find out what happens when a frustrated cat parent goes on strike.

EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE PROTEST-ing and striking about something these days. I'm organizing a pet parents strike. I am tired of cleaning up after Fudge and Ziggy. Anyone care to create a placard and come on board?

I spoil my cats, and they vomit their "appreciation" all over whatever I consider to be must-have feline accessories in their already overstocked home.

I know all about hairballs. And honestly, I understand the problem. In fact, I am very tolerant. But lately, Fudge and Ziggy have been getting careless. It seems like feline manners have gone out the window; it must be the "cats have staff" thing — it's going to their heads.

I remember when Fudge used to feel a hairball coming on, she would get up, get off the couch or the bed, and head for a tiled area. Occasionally she'd have an "oops" on a carpet.

I'm equipped with a myriad of products to target and destroy, but here's the thing: Lately, if she's going to expel a hairball (which is usually accompanied by some meal or other), she simply vomits on the spot and then stalks off, leaving the area in disgust as if I'm the one who has just created a nuclear dead zone to be avoided at all costs.

The problem is "the spot" where she's vomiting happens to be *my* bed, *my* couch — in other words, *my* favorite spot. Yes, pet parents are allowed to have those too. So I am forced to clean up, and then I have to put up with the lingering odors of the cleanup fluid for a while. In the meantime, Fudge has gone off and found a new spot to snooze.

Recently, Fudge and Ziggy received a gift of a plush pet bed, which has a soft blanket sewn into it, so the cats can nest and squish it around for ultimate comfort. It creates a surface like a giant laundry



Fudge and Ziggy enjoying their clean bed

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basket, and we all know how cats love to deposit fur on clean laundry. It's a huge success, to the extent that Fudge and Ziggy fight over occupation and eventually find a way to both get in there and share.

So you can imagine my surprise when I came downstairs one day to find the bed vacant and everyone skirting around it as if it didn't exist. On close inspection I found that someone had thrown up in it!

Being a dutiful pet parent, I instantly scooped up the goop, then sprayed the area with a stain remover so that the gorgeous upholstery would remain looking good as new.

Despite my best efforts, the bed remained vacant. Fudge came up, sniffed it and left. Ziggy came up, sniffed it and gave me a look that said, "What were you thinking? Now it smells of cleanup materials. Yuck. We can't possibly sleep here."

So I took the bed apart (all five pieces of it) and put it in the washing machine and then on a low tumble-dry setting. Next, I re-assembled and waited to see. Fudge walked past first and sniffed. Then

Ziggy did the same. He sniffs everything. We call him the Department of Agriculture in the household. He gave it the green light, and everyone climbed back in!

Two weeks later it was empty again. This time I didn't even try the cleaning fluids and simply headed straight to the washing machine after disassembling the five pieces. I re-assembled, and, yes — everyone jumped back in as if nothing had happened.

Then two days later the bed was a dead zone again; another vomit right in the middle. So I scraped it up and this time decided to air it outside instead. My protest is in full force. This time I am not falling for their implied request for another rewash.

It's currently vacant. There is a whole lot of sniffing going on. Time will tell.

Update: Four days later. It's occupied. I won. 🐾

Sandy Robins is an award-winning multi-media writer, blogger, TV personality, pet industry spokesperson and author of numerous cat

books including The Original Cat Fancy Cat Bible, on bookshelves now. Best of all she is a besotted pet parent to Fudge and Ziggy. Visit her at www.sandyrobinsonline.com.



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