

## Rescue dog: Albie's leap of faith onto our bed – such a Sleeping Beauty

Rescue dog Albie has a new favorite spot: catching a little shut-eye next to bedfellows Mr. and Mrs. Zheutlin. Despite the hair, the dirty paws, and possible ticks and fleas, they can't resist his twitchy presence.



- Rescue dog Albie snoozes atop the Zheutlin bed, way too cute to scoot from his nest.  
(Courtesy of the Zheutlin family)

By [Peter Zheutlin](#) posted October 31, 2012 at 4:08 pm EDT

Sleep, or more precisely a lack of it, has always been a big issue in our household.

When he was born, our older son, Danny, now 21, should have come with a warning label that said “sleep resistant.” As a baby and a toddler he fought off sleep like a hockey goalie furiously fighting off pucks. We bought all the “get your baby to sleep” books and tried all the recommended methods to no avail.

I once suggested we leave the books in his crib to see if he could figure it out himself. After all, nothing else was working.

For several years our younger son, Noah, now 17, wandered into our bedroom every night in his little blue pajamas, the ones with the cow-jumping-over-the-moon-print, and crawled into our bed.

In part because of our own exhaustion, and in part because he was so darned cute, we took the path of least resistance. But he was a thrasher who loved burrowing his feet into a sensitive part of my body.

Only in the past few years have we enjoyed relatively restful nights uninterrupted by sleepless or sleepy children. Which is why I am now so conflicted about Albie's new-found passion for our bed.

Albie is our half-yellow-Lab, half-golden-retriever rescue dog, with us now for close to four months.

When the [Labs4Rescue](#) folks paid us a home visit before Albie's adoption, we were asked if the dog would be allowed on the furniture. To be honest, I don't know if there was a wrong answer that would have sunk our chances of adopting him, but I was quick to say, “No,” because, well, I'm kind of fussy about such things.

The hair! The dirty paws! The ticks and fleas!

It took Albie a few nights in our home to even venture upstairs. Then, for three months, he slept under our bed in what must have felt like a den to him. One night, without warning, he made a leap of faith, literally and figuratively, onto the bed.

He's not a small dog; he weighs about 70 pounds and takes up a lot of real estate on our queen-size mattress. And once he's there, parked atop the covers, you can't pull the covers over you fully, which makes it hard to sleep. And he's also prone to twitching when he dreams and enjoying a wee-hours-of-the-morning scratch fest.

Now, one school of thought is that a dog trying to share your bed is a test of Alpha-ness. If you're permissive, you lose and the dog wins. But this doesn't seem to be about dominance or control at all.

I have no idea what traumas, if any, lurk in Albie's past or if he would even remember them. But I just haven't had the heart to bounce him back to the floor because I think he finds the bed, and our proximity, deeply comforting.

However, there's another reason I haven't kicked Albie out of bed yet: when he's all snuggled up in bed it's just about the most precious sight I've ever seen.

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