



I haven't been overly productive lately. Between the cold, the darkness and trying to get back into work mode after the Christmas holiday I've been feeling kind of drained and correspondingly lazy. I gave myself some simple goals over the weekend to try and perk myself up a bit: put away five things from my sewing room floor, make a cake, do some simple crafting,

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The cake went really poorly - half raw in the middle even with extra time in the oven ... at least it made the house smell good - but the crafting went really well. I've signed up for the [Frosted Pumpkin Stitchery's Dessert of the Month Club](#)

and also bought their [hoop travel bag](#)

pattern and that is what I made on Sunday evening.

I didn't want to get all bogged down with indecision so I decided on things pretty snappily. I started with the main panel fabric: The Owl and The Pussy Cat from Heather Ross's Far, Far Away series. I have just a fat quarter of this - a special treat tucked into a package of things I'd ordered from The Workroom - and have been carefully doling it out. This is the most I've used in one project and I like the idea of seeing it whenever I get out my cross stitch to work on. The top panel is just linen and the yellow patterned strip was a bit that had escaped my scrap bin and looked a nice size. I liked the yellow moons on the main panel so I picked a bright, orangey yellow batik for the inside. A beige zipper would have looked better than black but the black looks better than either the pink or purple that were my other options.

The hand stitching just above the join in the panels was added to hold the outside layer to the batting in the middle. The yellow rectangle is hand appliqued. I tried running some hand stitching around the inside of it but it looked kind of busy so I took it out. There ought to be some top stitching through all the layers on either side of the zipper but I didn't like the look of that either so I skipped it. If the lining starts to shift around too much I can run more hand stitching just below the zipper.

The zipper gave me a bit of trouble ... mostly because the first time I installed it I did it inside out. The instructions worked pretty well when I actually followed them and the result is fairly neat and tidy looking. I think it could look a little better though so I might research other methods

## A Hoop Bag

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before I make my next bag. I'm noticing just now that I forgot to put a ribbon through the zipper pull. I'll have to hunt something up later.

When I got up to do some ironing I found Fred asleep under my table.



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