

THE ELEANOR AND ANNA ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

May 18, 1949 (catalog date)

Description: In this segment, ER discusses her dog Fala's daily routine.

Participants: ER

[ER:] Thank you, Anna. Some time ago on this program I did a brief biography and character analysis of Fala, our beloved Scottie. On the assumption that enough people seem to be interested in him to justify such a dissertation, I talked of him then and I'm going to call—I'm going to talk of him again. Certainly the mail Fala gets indicates that he has many friends, and very often when I go anywhere people will ask me about Fala. They don't even wait to ask how I am or the children or anything else, they just-just ask about Fala, no one else. Now I've been asked, in a number of letters, to really give the routine of Fala's day, how does he spend his time. Well, I think I know Fala well enough to be able to tell you just about what he's doing at any given hour of the day even though I am here at Lake Success and he is at home in Hyde Park. But when I am home with him, this is the day we lead: early in the morning about seven o'clock, he and his grandson Tamas, both of whom sleep in my room, scratch at the side of my bed until I get out of bed and take them down and put them out in the yard. I have an enclosure for them because if I put them out together loose, they run away and hunt and I don't see them again. So, I put them in an enclosure. And then when I come down to breakfast, I bring them in and I give them each a little bit of milk, not much, just a little so they feel that they had breakfast too. And then Miss Thompson, who's very fond of them, always gives them each one piece of toast with butter on it, much more butter than toast, and that's all they get in the morning. (02:03)

Just as soon as we get up from table, they begin to dance around me, even Fala with his uh dignity which grows greater as the years pile up. They run to the door and they run back to me and they say, very plainly, "Hurry up with whatever you're doing, we're ready to go for a walk," and we get out just as soon as I've given my orders of whatever is necessary for the house to go on running. And then we walk in the woods. Sometimes it's a short walk, sometimes it's a long one, but I always have one of them on the leash and then half way through the walk I call the other one. Tamas is loose first because he is the youngest and pulls the hardest if he's on the leash first, and halfway through I put him on the leash and let Fala run. Fala doesn't run off as much, uh he doesn't take as many excursions from the road, but when I have one on the leash the other one has so far never run away by himself and that's why I keep them on the leash. Sometimes they almost haul me into the woods uh off the road because they get so excited and want to go hunting together, but I just can't let them do that because they'll go for miles and miles. (3:33)

When we come in, I put them back in their enclosure, if they show a desire to come in, I bring them in with me. And they'll sit near me while I work or if I'm doing anything, like going in the car or doing-going anywhere where I can take them, I take them along in the car and uh keep them on the leash if I get out. And, their afternoon is very much like their morning, we take um a walk, but at five o'clock their tummies tell them it's time for their dinner and they'll give me no peace. If they're outside they bark, and if they're inside they just sit in front of me and beg. They get their dinner and then they're quite contented. I put them out for a while and then they come in for dinner and sit around very contentedly. They want to be petted and they get petted and they get brushed and so forth. And then at ten o'clock they just give us no peace, whoever is there, until I take them out again and I put them to bed for the night in my room, even though I may not go to bed for hours later. And when I'm away, Mr. Linicker [name unknown], who takes charge of them, um does practically the same thing that I do when I'm there, only he keeps both of them on the leash because he's so afraid they'll run away. But, as uh I can only say that I

think Fala is a very happy little dog and he enjoys his retirement. And, he's very good to his descendants. He's just as good to his six months old great-grandchildren as he is to his grandson. I only wish that everyone's life could have such an enjoyable and comfortable twilight. And now back to my daughter, Anna, in Hollywood.

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