

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

February 22, 1951

Description: In the opening segment, ER and Elliott Roosevelt respond to a listener's question about the effects of global uncertainty on career aspirations. In the interview segment, ER's guest is French actress Denise Darcel.

Participants: ER, Elliott, Denise Darcel

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(33:55)

[ER:] Good afternoon, this is Eleanor Roosevelt. I am happy to welcome you for another visit here in my living room at the Park Sheraton Hotel. As usual, I have a guest that you will be anxious to meet and as usual Elliott will assist me on the program. And now here is Elliott.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you, Mother. Occasionally we like to lighten the content of these daily broadcasts by bringing a personality whose professional life is devoted to fun and glamour, such as our guest today, Miss Denise Darcel. I have reason to believe though from our conversation before the broadcast that Miss Darcel has more than just fun and glamour to contribute to this program. I'm going to ask Miss Darcel's permission to chat briefly with Mother and answer to a letter Mother has received from one of our listeners who expresses a lack of understanding of a matter being weighed in the editorial sections of our daily newspapers. Before Mother and I get started, however, a word from our announcer will speak for the sponsors who make this recorded program possible.

[Break 35:03-35:17]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother, I have here a letter from a lady in New York who says, "I am taking the liberty of sending you a letter I received from my daughter yesterday. She's nineteen years old and in her third year at the University of Chicago. I listened to you on the radio yesterday and I wish I could repeat what you said about the world situation, and how we can all work and strive for peace. Could you send an excerpt of this speech to my daughter?" Unfortunately, we can't do this. There's no transcripts of these extemporaneous discussions are made. And now here is the daughter's letter: "Sunday again and another week is beginning. Even if the war news is no worse, one gets more and more depressed because it gets no better. My mind runs around and around, but I never seem to get any place. The fault is everybody's, but all of us think we and our nation are right. What can be done? I am finding out about lab technician. It would take two years of post-graduate work, then one year or more of apprenticeship in a hospital. What do you think? Is it right to start on such a long term project in these days, or am I too young to say such a thing?" Would you make a comment and an answer to this young lady? (36:52)

[ER:] Well, I should say of course she's right to start on [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] her preparation for whatever the thing is she wants to be. We are living in the world; if she has to stop at some point and do something else, whatever preparation she's had will be to the good for whatever she has to do, and then she can go on again. I-I cannot understand young people who can't uh realize that all through -- why I can understand, of course, that's very foolish of me; of course I can understand that it's very hard for young people to live with uncertainty -- but if they would look back, uh they would realize that all through history, people have lived with uncertainty. And if we stopped and didn't do the things we ordinarily do in life, it would have a very bad effect upon civilization as a whole. So that I um -- I think I would say to any young woman, or young man: start and do the thing that you want to do, and that you feel you should

prepare for. If you have to off, you'll be that much ahead on what you want to do. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] The younger you are, really, the easier it is because you have more time.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well um uh i-in other words uh on this-uh this statement of hers, is it right to start on such a long term project in these days, she's just nineteen years old, and she's got her whole life to live. She might just as well start now! [laughs]

[ER:] Um, well I think she might 'course just as well start, and say that you're going to stop is perfect nonsense because you feel a little uncertain about what the world is going to be like. Um you're never certain. And I-I suppose this a dreadful uh way to talk to anyone who is young, but I wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea for everyone to realize that um after all, they live by the grace of God and that uh the things that happen to you don't of necessity have to be the big things. You might just um fall down stairs tomorrow or five minutes from now. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] And um uh it-it isn't uh -- the whole of life is uncertain! And-and why do we fuss about-out the big things only eh? And if we were going to begin and be afraid, why we'd never -- we'd sit in a chair all the time and never move because we'd never know what may happen as we move! [laughs] And therefore, I think that uh-we that we better just pick ourselves together and say, "I wake up this morning, thank God-od that -- now that I am going to start out and live as well as I can live all day, and as fully, and get along, and enjoy every minute of it, and do a good job-ob. And uh if God is good and it's his will, I'll go to sleep tonight and wake up tomorrow morning!" And that's that. [laughs]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, I think also it's well to remind ourselves that we've been very fortunate in this country. We are a people who have had none of the sufferings that have gone on in other parts of the world. Other young people of nineteen that have been uh brought up uh-and through the years and ravages of two world wars, and uh who have lived under the constant threat of war, the constant threat of dictatorship, uh the constant threat of-of starvation. Depending on what part of the world you've lived in, this young lady has been singularly fortunate. [ER and Elliott Roosevelt overlap] But I'd like to go to another part of the letter.

[ER:] Of course, I wonder if she's read uh only the first part of a statement [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] um which uh is the beginning of Stringfellow um Barr's *Let's Join the Human Race*. I don't happen to agree with the end of it and his solutions, but um uh in the uh beginning, he gives the average chance of life of four people in different parts of the world, and uh your chance of being born in the United States and being born white, for instance, is just one in so many-y. Far more people are born colored and born somewhere else in the world where their chance of life then is -- uh --

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That much less.

[ER:] That much less. For instance, in the first year they might uh die with great uh great frequency in certain parts of the world, if that's where they have to be born.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That's correct. Well, I-I'd like to go back to uh a part of her letter, the early part where she was being very depressed by the war news, and her mind was running around and around, and never seemed to get any place. She made a very positive statement, she said, "The fault is everybody's, but all of us think we and our nation are right. What can be done?" I think you might just comment briefly on that part of the letter because there's something very definite to be done.

[ER:] Well uh, let's say first when she says, "the fault is everybody's," of course uh all human beings uh make mistakes; of course our nation makes mistakes. Our people, and we ourselves make mistakes, but there is relativity in all this, and at least we can say, I think, that um by in large our people have tried very hard to do the right thing. And, uh, that doesn't mean we've always done it, that just means that our motives have been good, and that we have actually tried to do the right thing-ing. And um I think that it would be a good thing for her to list the reasons why she feels that we have done the right thing and that

we uh are trying to do the right thing, and then see to it that everybody that she knows um keeps their standards high and lives up to them.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] I-I agree with that, and I think in closing that we might add that by studying to be a lab technician, she is equipping herself both for peacetime and for war. To help in the promotion of peace and in the event that unfortunately we do have war that she will be of service in the defense of her country.

[ER:] I do think that's true.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Uh I think we have to go on at this point to another part in our program, and I hope that this answer has been satisfactory to the lady who sent it in.

[Break 44:20-44:37]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now to Mrs. Roosevelt's guest for today. Sitting opposite Mother is the very charming young lady, quite recently known as the most beautiful girl in France. Uh, I must add a short note to say to say that she has arrived to this broadcast with a touch of laryngitis, but uh that I think you'll have no difficulty in understanding her and in uh enjoying her interview. Mother, will you introduce your guest?

[ER:] With great pleasure, Elliott. This young lady has made a great name for herself in the United States in the entertainment field, but I am particularly impressed with the background leading to her success. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you Mademoiselle Denise Darcel.

[Denise Darcel:] Merci beaucoup, Madame Roosevelt.

[ER:] To begin with, Ms. Darcel, where in France were you born? [ER and Denise Darcel overlap] The city or the country?

[Denise Darcel:] In Paris. In Paris in France.

[ER:] Oh! You were born in Paris! [Denise Darcel: Mhm.] Oh, well you were only in your teens during World War II while France was occupied by the Germans. What was your life like then?

[Denise Darcel:] Well I was uh -- when the Germans arrived in France, I was in the country; we have a country home near Besançon and we have a little village there. And uh when they came -- German came - - we left our house. We took all the cars, the family, everything, and it was-it was a dreadful thing. We go on the road, you know, for months -- not months, I should think -- weeks. And we were so hungry, and it was panicky, you know, very panicky.

[ER:] Well now uh did the Germans actually occupy your home?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes they did. You know uh some people was uh getting us panicky, maybe some spy was saying uh, "the German are burning all the cities, are very bad with the ladies." So I go "Oh mother, I want to go, I'm scared." My father said, "Don't worry, we stay home. It's better." But we run and we made a mistake because uh the Germans just arrive and take our home. You see?

[ER:] It would have been better had you stayed.

[Denise Darcel:] It-they make us s-scared, so we left, and it was dreadful. We came back, everything was gone of the house. There were uh you know uh pictures of Hitler, and the -- it was a very strange thing. [unclear] –

[ER:] How long were you away?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, maybe uh two or three months. You see we arrived in the uh the frontière of the Zone Rouge, [ER: Yes.] la Zone Rouge -- the free zone. [ER: Yes.] The Germans stop and the free zone en [unclear term] -- all the refugees were there. We-we sleep on the barracks, you know. (47:17)

[ER:] You slept in barracks?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, uh father was ill. My father was a wounded -- very bad wounded for the War One. [ER: War One. Oh yes.] Mhm. So that dr-d-driving all night [ER: Mhm] with the, you know, the plane diving on us, and with a mitrailleuse [ER: Oh yes]. My father was-is a-a [unclear, maybe “hard bête?”] [hard beast] so when we go over there, it was very funny because we have no much food, you see, and the mayor of the city tried to uh give food to everybody. So I work in the kitchen with my mother, and I get a wonderful meal, I eat -- I had sort of big appetite then [Elliott Roosevelt: Hm!] and my father was all right then. And then we came back to Paris [ER: Mhm.] and uh after the country the Germans had left. Our home.

[ER:] Oh that was after the-after the Germans had left –

[Denise Darcel:] They stay a little there, but not very long.

[ER:] I see.

[Denise Darcel:] With our house.

[ER:] Well now, you were twice in prison, and I wonder what happened to your family during that time?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, first I, uh -- my sister and me, we work in a factory to um close the cases of ammunitions for the [ER: Oh yes.] underground.

[ER:] Well now uh did you do that openly or -- ?

[ER and Denise Darcel overlap]

[Denise Darcel:] No, in the night in the country.

[ER:] Well di -- you worked at night? Well, what did you do in the daytime?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, I worked. I was a sales girl.

[ER:] Oh, a sales girl in Paris! [Denise Darcel: Mhm. Yes.] And then uh you did this uh at night [Denise Darcel: Yes.] without anybody knowing?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, not very long, not very long. Because after I just-I just did that in night, because I couldn't stand it too long, you know. [ER: Yes.] Night and day working like that. For a while we did it, then we said just a few hours.

[ER:] Well, but that was -- and was that they suspected you, and they um—

[Denise Darcel:] Not that. It was other story. After I work in a German kommandantur [ER: Oh yes.] And they -- I learned, you know, German in school, I was in-in Germans before the war. [ER: Mhm.] So they make me learn -- you know, th-better, and they put me not as a secretarial, but they put me in the kitchen! [ER laughs] So I had to do the dishes; I had to -- I have never worked so much in all my life. Because you know that I was in where the General you know was, but yet I was in a kitchen, and I was serving them in a conférence, and everything I hear, I repeat, and picked up the papers, and we photographed them. But I have to be there at uh seven in the morning, I have to take the first metro, [ER: Yes.] five thirty, and uh the first train I have to run thirty minutes. Oh, I -- my, what a work I did. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] [ER: You worked very hard.] It was a good experience, I'm glad.

[ER:] Plus it was -- you were doing uh, you were doing really spy work there of course.

[Denise Darcel:] Indeed, and it was -- at first I said you know my mother didn't want me to do it. And I said you know when you're young, you want to be a hero, and you know -- this is wonderful to do -- and I will plan to do it, but I was offered, you know, because I was-I was -- I don't like any kind of --of course there's enemies, but yet I don't like to betray, you know, I'm not the type -- I like to see what I think. And I hate to, you know, to -- well it was good for the country, I hate to do that.

[ER:] Well --

[Denise Darcel:] And they-and they suspected me then. [Denise Darcel and ER overlap] And they put me in prison. Yes.

[ER:] And that's how you came to go to prison. Mm. [Denise Darcel: Mhm.] Well, I-I don't wonder that um uh they-they must have um have wondered why you were working in the-in the kitchen when uh --

[Denise Darcel:] There was -- I mean, "Well, uh you could be a spy," they told me. Uh, "Speak English?" I say, "No, I don't speak English." They said, "Well um, a girl like you, I mean," -- a girl like me, silly to say that, but -- tell me, "you should uh be working in the kitchen, you know." I was taking the dishes, and -- "Twenty-four, I was serving twenty-four uh officers in the tables.

[ER:] Oh yes?

[Denise Darcel:] And the conférence, you know, and-and uh -- well they-they find out. [ER: Yes. When they--] They find out. And I said that I had no proof-they had no proof. [ER: Yes.] So the -- oh I had a terrible time in prison.

[ER:] So they finally had to leave -- let you-let you go, because it [unclear].

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, uh the Americans were coming, that's why let me go. [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laugh] They were scared, you know. And the u-the Americans bombard the German prison, [ER: Mhm.] and I wishing that-- I say, "Ma, I don't mind to die." My mother, my family would die in a prison with the Germans-- I die! [ER laughs] I die twice-- [Denise Darcel and Elliott Roosevelt laugh]

[ER:] Well that I think was a terrible, terrible thing to go through.

[Denise Darcel:] But I'm glad I did it because uh you appreciate life much more, what you have here in America, you have such wonderful uh food and comfort and oh, if people knew how awful it is, a war, I

think everybody would get together and-and fight -- they don't know what it is, how terrible it is. To be hungry all the time.

[ER:] Well, I-I'm very-I'm very much interested to hear you say that, because um of course I have a feeling that um most people who live in a country which has never actually had war on its own doorstep have no idea-ah what the actual situation is. [Denise Darcel: No.] And neither do they know the effect it has on people who have first lived in a country where they've had to go through all the tenseness of bombings and so forth, and then been conquered and have the conqueror living in their country. That does something to people's souls, don't you think it does?

[Denise Darcel:] It does. In France, people are very bitter, you know everybody was fighting and it was horrid atmosphere, you know. And of course, when you-we had for the food, we had so much a month: a little piece of butter, so when you get to butter you know in a day it's gone. I used to hide my bread on a top of a shelf. I p-and I put uh you know I took a little piece for lunch, a little piece for dinner, and after that I said, "Oh, I don't care, I eat everything. I starve tonight." Oh bu-we have the potatoes; we have not the butter. When you have the butter, we have no bread. When you have the bread, never have --

[ER:] Never have both together?

[Denise Darcel:] No, it was very hard. And we usually co-go to the country to pick up some food, because we had uh farms over there. So we-we take the food, bring it back, and we-you know we have look sorry like regular-like we're just having a vacation. We have to carry the -- I don't know how I to-to put the --  
[ER:] Did you hide it under your skirts?

[Denise Darcel:] Oh no, we have heavy suitcases. [ER: Oh.] But we carry them ourself. And I never in my life could do it again. I mean when you have [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] -- once you have food, I carry I don't know how many pounds.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Was it difficult to tell uh uh the collaborators with the Germans from the resistance people in- [Denise Darcel: Very.] in France? You never knew really who [Denise Darcel: No.] your friends were.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh no, but the people I work with uh everybody thought they were working for [Erwin] Rommel for the Germans, [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] And the -- me too! The-the-the French police after the war, the little young boys who have done nothing during the war, we have most of them go with Germans' collaborate. They start to get, you know, resistance, and then they put you know colonels, captains, and then they take everybody and shoot everybody -- the French people. So I wasn't-I wasn't worried after that. Why to go ma -- I have the French police who had to took me away [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] because they thought I was with the Germans. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] You know y—

[ER:] Well, because you'd worked and-and there was no who could say --

[Elliott Roosevelt:] You worked [ER: [unclear]] in the m-German military mess. [Denise Darcel: Yes!] Officers' mess.

[ER:] And there was no one who could say that you had been uh giving um information.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh yes. [Elliott Roosevelt: Oh yes.] The-the-the wide-uh, very influential people, [ER: Mm.] one of the biggest uh en la resistance. But uh those are the very people who live near your home [Denise Darcel and ER overlap] -- they don't know it.

[ER:] Yes, they're the people who lived near your home and they don't know it.

[Denise Darcel:] And it was very bad. That made me feel the worst of all [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] because I had very many enemies that way, and I couldn't say anything.

[ER:] No, you couldn't say. Of course not.

[Denise Darcel:] My mother was so dying, my mother, you know?

[ER:] I suppose [Elliott Roosevelt: Mm.] your mother worried every minute because --

[Denise Darcel:] Oh, she had been so, so savage, my poor mother. [ER: Ah.] She just came in America for six months.

[ER:] Oh! Did she just come to America?

[Denise Darcel:] And my two sisters. But my mother is back now with my sister, but she will be back in the country here for -- you know it's the future, it's just such a wonderfully -- I love America.

[ER:] You love America! Well, isn't that wonderful to hear you [laughs] feel that way! Well I have heard um other people who said that when they had been uh in a country where they've gone through um-uh a war uh that then they really were appreciative of the sense of freedom.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh, definitely. They just could see where it is. The line on the street, you know to-to have uh vegetables, and uh no l-shoes, if ever the coal, we had no coal. We had no warm water for the winter. And no coal, I mean we are f -- and everything, and the Germans, uh we-we couldn't be -- say a word, they could just shoot us. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] We-we were pri-prisoners!

[ER:] I-I love your speaking of having a vegetable and having the warm water, because I once uh was talking to Mrs. Kermit Roosevelt, [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] my cousin, and um talking about what would be the things if the war came into your country that you would miss most and she looked me and she said, "I think I would miss most a good, hot bath." [laughs]

[Denise Darcel:] And milk, and milk.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Milk, yes.

[Denise Darcel:] And no milk. Oh, milk. I would've died for milk, really. [ER laughs]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother and Mademoiselle, do you mind if we just uh stop the interview for just a moment, and we'll have a message from uh our announcer and then we'll come right back to the interview, and we'll hear something I hope about your present career. [ER laughs]

[Break 56:48-56:55]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now let us return uh with all possible speed to your interview, Mother, with Mademoiselle Denise Darcel.

[ER:] Well now, I want to ask you how did you happen to come to this country?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, I was -- after the war, I was a sales girl in the perfume counter, and uh the Americans re-reporters and French they were looking for uh new faces you know for uh-for to go to Hollywood, things like that, to make a publicit  for them paper. So they-they saw me and they like me. So they talk to me and the-they came back, and they brought the photographers, and I was gone. All of my little star with the photographs, and they put me plumes, and mink on, and -- It was a-it was a dream. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] It was wonderful! I was just, you know. And I made -- this is a Windsor method of dress, of China, pieces of [unknown term]. It was just a-a fairy for me-fairytale?

[Elliott Roosevelt and ER overlap]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Fairytale.

[ER:] Fairytale. Yes.

[Denise Darcel:] And then I was the most publicized woman de-in France. [ER: France.] And they said I was beautiful. I was younger then [ER: Photographs -- ] I was younger, better looking than now. [laughs] And uh then they told me, "You're going to Hollywood." So I waited quite long before going Hollywood, I -- you know? So when I was waiting, then it was that publicit  I had, I start to sing. I always wanted to sing. All my life I saw my sister in contests and parties, you know, so I start to sing in a club. And then after I receive the-the paper uh to come to uh make a picture --

[ER:] had you been trained to sing [Denise Darcel: No.] or just naturally? [Denise Darcel: Mhm.] Just naturally.

[Denise Darcel:] Yeah, naturally. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[ER:] And so you began to sing in a club in Paris?

[Denise Darcel:] With my sister -- duets.

[ER:] Duets?

[Denise Darcel:] Duets.

[ER:] Yes.

[Denise Darcel:] And uh then I was told it was for a picture, a singing part in uh Warner Brothers -- *To the Victor*? [ER: Oh yes.], I sung "La vie en rose," uh this wonderful French song. [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] And then I had a little hard time in Hollywood, you know. I was no family, a nobody, so I had to uh work. I w-go back to my sales girl. Oh that was killing me, I had to go back selling. It was an awful --

[Elliott Roosevelt:] In Hollywood?

[Denise Darcel:] Up and down, up and down. [laughs]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] You went back to sa-sales girl in Hollywood?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, I was in Saks Fifth Avenue [Elliott Roosevelt: Oh. Uh huh.] in a department of the man. And I sold-ah for a little while, and I make singing, and I make a little play, and I make a little picture. And uh I have a very hard time, and I wouldn't give up. I wouldn't go with my Mother, and worry her in France, she'd been uh worried. So th-I want to make -- so I can help her. And I did it.

[ER:] You finally did it.

[Denise Darcel:] The picture *Battleground*. [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] [ER: Oh yes.] So uh everything in my dream come true. I want my mother to come here, she came; my sister, I bought her everything she wanted and she wears—

[ER:] Well now have you got-have you got your sister with you now?

[Denise Darcel:] One more. [ER: Oh, one -- ] The one who sing. And she just uh sang in Boston in the [unclear term] room for five weeks. She has a beautiful voice.

[ER:] Oh, isn't that wonderful! And uh

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Wonderful.

[Denise Darcel:] She make a career here, too.

[ER:] Well now, will you be able to work together sometimes?

[Denise Darcel:] Maybe, who knows? We're a different type, you see, maybe we could do something together.

[ER:] And um uh she's going to stay here, or is she only here for six months?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, she trying to get the paper so she can stay here longer. [Denise Darcel and ER overlap] She love it here.

[ER:] And then you have another sister?

[Denise Darcel:] I have three more in France.

[ER:] Three more? Oh! [Denise Darcel: Yes.] So there are -- what, five [Elliott Roosevelt: Five sisters.] of you all together?

[Denise Darcel:] Five, and two dead. We were seven. We were seven in the family, yes. [ER: My goodness.] And my father died when the war came. My mother had a very hard time, you know, during that war, so she was very glad to come here, it was -- she couldn't believe it oh she couldn't believe the food and everything. I-I still don't get over [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] -- each time I go to a market I just swoon. To see all those things you can just take it -- no tickets. Everything you want, you can have. I just never will get over that!

[ER:] [laughs] And I understand you are a very good cook!

[Denise Darcel:] I am, uh well -- I am. I am. [Elliott Roosevelt and ER laugh] I love my food and I love to eat, so -- [Elliott Roosevelt laughs.] Ah --

[ER:] You love to eat and you love to uh make it nice to eat!

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, I love to make s-wine sauce, and -- [ER coughs] I just love to cook.

[ER:] You love to cook. [Denise Darcel: Yes.] Well isn't that wonderful! That's great fun, I think, [Denise Darcel: It is indeed. Mhm.] that you like it that way. Well now, what are your plans, uh what are you going to do? What are you here in New York doing now?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, I am in uh Strand Theater on a stage. I'm singing. And I just close a Cotillon room in Pierre Hotel. [ER: Oh yes.] Mhm. And I am going to uh do three more weeks in the Strand, and I have to have one week rest in Florida. [ER: Yes.] I have been in-in rehearsal so long, they kill me in New York! [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laugh] So it-after, I want to come back to have –

[ER:] How many-how many shows do you do a day in the Strand?

[Denise Darcel:] Four-uh and five.

[ER:] Four and five shows a day!

[Denise Darcel:] Yes.

[ER:] Whoo! I call that a hard work.

[Denise Darcel:] And uh f-uh I-last week I doubled in the Cotillon room and the Strand. That is why I have uh laryngite now. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] [ER: Oh, dear.] I have never been so [unclear] in my life back and forth, and back and forth, I had a heart attack. I thought I had.

[ER:] Good gracious.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh mon dieu, mon dieu.

[ER:] Well now -- [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laugh] Well, um now you're in the Strand for three weeks, then what are you doing?

[Denise Darcel:] Well I-I have some television shows planning.

[ER:] Oh you have some television shows.

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, and I want my own television show too.

[ER:] Oh.

[Denise Darcel and Elliott Roosevelt overlap]

[Denise Darcel:] I'm working on it.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Is that your-is that your real ambition, to have your own televisions show?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes. I like that; I like to be in a people home. I like people very much, and this way I can be close to the people. You see—

[ER:] Yes, in television. Yes, that's true! You can really feel as though you're uh in their homes with them.

[Denise Darcel:] Yes, I do! And uh I love the night club work too.

[ER and Denise Darcel overlap]

[ER:] You like the –

[Denise Darcel:] famous people around me, I love to talk, you know.

[ER:] Yes, and-and uh I'm sure that people love you because you like them! [ER and Denise Darcel laugh] [Denise Darcel: They can.] That's very apt, I think, to be -- Well then after you've um done your television, are you still hoping to do a play or -- ?

[Denise Darcel:] Well, we are negoti-negotiating [clears throat] [Elliott Roosevelt: That's right.] [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] on plays and uh a picture in New York, maybe two pictures in New York. That would be wonderful [Elliott Roosevelt: Uh huh.], so I could do both, see? [ER: Mhm.] And in Hollywood too, I have some pictures planned for Hollywood.

[ER:] Oh, well I think that's uh –

[Denise Darcel:] I like to make some pictures.

[ER:] You really got a future before you [Denise Darcel: Oh, I love to work!] and your hoping to bring over your mother and-and have her stay again?

[Denise Darcel:] Yes. She will come back.

[ER:] She'll come back.

[Denise Darcel:] She wanted to go back to France and see her other daughters, and their baby. And she wanted to show off you know -- excuse me, excuse my English-- [ER: What you -- ] She wanted to show off uh and everything she got to America. My little sister too, she- [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] she took all my clothes, my little sister. [ER: Oh!] She rob me! [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] She took everything I had, my -- everything! But they were so happy and they wanted to go back and show it in France what they have from, America you know. [ER: And then -- ] 'Cause they'll come back.

[ER:] They'll come back and be with you again.

[Denise Darcel:] Yes.

[ER:] Well, I think that sounds very pleasant. Well now, I'd like to ask you something about our young people here because you have known young people abroad, and I wonder if you think that our young people here are as aware of the world situation as the young people are in Europe because I know that our young people, many of them are nervous about what's going to happen, and-and afraid of the future um, but do you really think they understand as well here as they do in Europe?

[Denise Darcel:] I don't think they possibly can understand it because if you have not been through an experience, you never can know it. And they just cannot believe what it is because I remember before the war, said, "The war is coming." They said, "It's terrible, the war." But you see it's terrible, you know, but you don't imagine when you've never been hungry in all your life. You say, "It must be awful to be hungry." But you cannot imagine how awful it is. You see? And I don't think they can -- uh, I think they're spoiled in a way here. [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] But it's not them fault; they have everything they want to eat, they don't know what it is to be hungry, th -- when you are in bed in the night and you have the -- you're just, you know, come back from the day of work, you go to bed, and you hear the sirens, and

you hear the plane coming, you don't know where it's going to fall on you, and you have to run downstairs. My mother was so cute, she-she used to take everything, my mother. Her hats, her furs, and she took it all -- uh-of-everything precious out, and we come back and forth and back and forth. We fall down the shelters, and the bombardement was close to our house. Very close. Once it was big de bombardement. I was in a swimming pool, [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] open, and then the-the bomb fall close to it. So we run and my sister was in a Métro opening. And I was down, I say, "Come here!" I tell her, "Please don't stay there looking at the plane." She go and run and the bomb fell where she was. [ER: Goodness.] The bomb fall where she was, and we all fall on each other and we were a little hurt. And I run home, take a little train, and the train wa -- e-every station was burning, you know. It was very close to my house. I go to my house, and I see where my home is, fire and smoke. And my mother you know. We run, run, but it was after. But all those things, I mean it's just trag --

[Elliott Roosevelt:] You mean it was really another house.

[Denise Darcel:] It was just after the bridge. we were near [Elliott Roosevelt: Oh.] the river Seine [Elliott Roosevelt: Uh huh.] worry, and uh everything on the other side was completely down. [ER: Oh yes.] We were so lucky.

[ER:] Yes, you were very lucky. [Denise Darcel: We were.] But still, um it must have been a terrible moment when you weren't quite sure that your mother wasn't in that house.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh, but we run. We-everybody was running this way. It was bombardement here, bombardement there -- Everybody. It was so panicky. And --

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Was that a daytime bombing?

[Denise Darcel:] A daytime bombing.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Americans.

[Denise Darcel:] Meri -- oui, Americans, uh huh. And uh, you know we were hungry all the time, and it's tough and you cannot buy anything, you cannot eat, you can't have uh warmth, no warm water in the winter time. They just don't know how awful it is. They would never re-realize should think of it very deeply, everybody should fight to have the peace because they just don't know what it is. And you're into it, you're into it, and then it's hard to get out of it. So it is better to stop it before.

[ER:] It's the little things that you remember. I mean, the little, daily things that bother you most: the hunger, the dirt, the lack of comfort. Those are the things that now you look back upon. [Denise Darcel: Oh I do, I do indeed.] Uh it's not really -- now you haven't once said um you were afraid of dying. I mean, nobody seems to-to worry uh if they're going to be blown up, they're going to be blown up.

[Denise Darcel: Yes.] But um what you really carry around your mind afterwards is the um just the deprivations [Denise Darcel: Yes.] the things you can't have every day, day in and day out.

[Denise Darcel:] True, it's true. Very, very, very true.

[ER:] That's uh-that's quite true because it's what makes life just impossible to live.

[Denise Darcel:] It's true. [stammers] That comfort and uh freedom, I mean uh and [Elliott Roosevelt: Um --] it is no use to live, really.

Elliott Roosevelt:] I imagine now that you have been through that and you -- this uh wonderful new world that you've been telling us about has opened up with all of its varied careers for you that you'd hate to see another war come along now.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh non! Ah that would be-that would be too much! [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] Ah, it would be too much -- never! [ER laughs] You-you sh-you musn't have a war in America because you're too strong.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well you just send a message over to Uncle Joe Stalin and ask him if he'll please [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] stay home.

[Denise Darcel:] Oh. Why doesn't he leave us alone.

[ER:] Leave us alone. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] I think that it is a very good idea! [Denise Darcel and ER laugh] I'm sure if you could deliver that message in person, it would have a great effect! [Denise Darcel, Elliott Roosevelt and ER laugh]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well I am afraid that the time of our interview has about come to a close now because uh we have to get on to another part of the program. And I'm terribly sorry we can't go on and chat further. Mother, will you say goodbye?

[ER:] Well I am so glad to have had you with us today [Denise Darcel: Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt.] and I thank you so much for coming.

[Denise Darcel:] I am so happy to have met you too.

[ER:] Thank you.

[Break 1:08:53]

[ER:] I'd like to take a few minutes to read a letter from one of my listeners who heard our discussion about the reading habits of children. She has an excellent suggestion. She writes, "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt, I look forward to your program eagerly each day. I've heard the problem of the parent of the twelve year old with regard to her desire uh to have her child to read more books more frequently. I sympathize with this intelligent parent as it is a tremendous task because of our many diversions to take its place. I think too many of us are letting this most relaxing, informative, and pleasurable pastime slip past us, and it is most regrettable. I had the same problem with my nine year old child. We are surrounded by the best books suitable for her to read. After much thought, I took one of Mark Twain's from our shelf and read it to her. She enjoyed it so much that I find she does not wait for me to finish it. I suggest the method of the parent and child reading together. Perhaps each reading a chapter to the other, or some similar method? Have her read aloud to you while you are sewing or ironing. The relationship proves to be a healthy and a happy one. Hoping I've been of some help, I remain sincerely yours, Mrs. H. [unclear term: last name, could be "Serdin"]." I think that's a very good idea.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now it's time to close the program and to remind you that you have been listening to the Eleanor Program which comes to you each Monday through Friday at the same time. And this is Elliott Roosevelt speaking and wishing you all good day.

(1:10:48)

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