

## THE ELEANOR AND ANNA ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1949 (catalog date)

Description: In this segment, ER discusses her dog, Fala, a Scottish terrier.

Participants: ER

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[ER:] Thank you, Anna. Today I'm going to introduce you to a friend of mine. He's not with me here in the studio in person, although I daresay he might like to be. But I thought it best that he remain at home for he is getting rather advanced in years now. And although basically of a sunny and lovable disposition, he has his crotchety moments. His name is Fala. He has many friends and many correspondents all over the country, in fact, all over the world. So much interest has been expressed in Fala that I thought it about time I introduced him to you. I must confess though that all of this attention has had its effect on Fala. It has given him a serene and unshakeable sense of his own importance. Not that he's pompous or conceited, rather I think the key to his character in his later years is his immense dignity. Fala first came into our lives, oh, about uh seven and a half years ago, when he was about six months old. And [coughs] he came from a lady who my husband had been able to help. And uh she wanted to do something in recognition of the help which he had given her and she raised Scotties. So she asked Miss

[Margaret] Suckley, my husband's cousin, to take this puppy and train the puppy and then give it to my husband. And from the time he came, he settled in to the White House habits as though that was just a perfectly natural life for a little dog. A good many dogs kicked against the pricks, they didn't like the crowds downstairs and they thought that they had to defend the family and they were very unhappy, but Fala just seemed to like everything. He went with my husband on board ship, on trains, and he always, being Scotch, in the long run got his own way. At first, my husband thought that he should sleep, when we went on trains, in the baggage car at night. But one night Fala decided he didn't like the baggage car so he settled himself, when time came to go to bed, on the long couch in the back of the observation car. And no matter how they tried they couldn't get him off the couch. They could have lifted him of course and carried him, but when he was cross he was uh just sulky, and Frank never liked him to be sulky. And so he finally said, "Fala do you want to sleep here tonight?" and Fala just settled more comfortably into the cushion and so there's where he slept from then on.

Now, he's uh happy because his grandson has come to live with us. It's a very interesting thing about Fala, I've never known him to pick a fight with any other dog. Uh even when the puppy would bother him he would nip him perhaps, but he never in any way hurt him. And this puppy, this new one, called Tamas McFala, Tamas McFala uh is uh quite annoying at times but Fala just walks away and lies down somewhere else just the way he does when the children bother him. He's never snapped at a child, but they do bother him. And when they get too pestiferous, he goes and gets under Miss [Malvina] Thompson's desk or goes up to my study upstairs and gets very close to my chair. He's very uh conscious of his past importance and whenever he hears a siren he stiffens up as though he knew that had something to do with him. And uh he thinks that all cars will look out for him. He never thinks of getting out of the road. And he is, for that reason, curtailed a little in his activities because I'm afraid he'd get run over if he goes out on the main road. So though these dogs are hunters, and he loves to go off in the woods, still I try to keep him pretty well around the house and where we can see him. But his life is a happy life and I think that um I—he would like me to give you all his best regards and to thank you for his interest in him. Children love him and many older people love him and I think that goes through even to his own uh dog knowledge. Now back to my daughter, Anna, in Hollywood.

[silence 5:20-5:40]

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