

Freddie The Flat Leaver



I wonder if any of my readers are familiar with the expression “*Flat Leaver*”. It was an expression that was commonly used during my youth and teenage years. The only other person I know, who remembers this expression is my husband, George.

I have used “flat leaver” in the presence of many of my family and young friends in regard to Freddie, our three year old Maltese, only to have to give an explanation of what those words mean. Even my nephew, Richard, was interested in finding the meaning and sent me a link from UrbanDictionary.com on the true meaning of “flat leaver”.

However, I am still wondering if this was an expression mainly used in New York City, as that was where I grew up and you would hear “flat leaver” uttered many times in the schoolyard.

Nowadays, I only use this expression when I talk about Freddie.

He is such a lovable dog to George and me and fits the true meaning of “lap dog”. Freddie needs to constantly be with us anytime we are at home. When we are sitting down, he will jump right into our laps and curl up in a very contented ball of fur. He even taps your hand as if to say, “I’m here, I need some stroking”. If he was a cat, I know he would be purring his head off! Needless to say, Freddie gets loads of love and hugs and kisses from us. But Freddie is also a very social dog and loves human company, whether it is adults or children he has to be right in the center of their attention.

When Freddie was a small puppy and meeting people for the first time, I would always hold him in my arms and introduce him to our guests. He would growl if they tried to pet him and

would burrow deeper in my arms. After doing this several times and my being concerned that he would not be friendly to other people and just be attached to George and me, I tried a little "dog psychology" and found a solution.

I realized that Freddie would be so excited to greet someone when they came into the house and would do the usual little dog yapping. I learned if they picked him up, rather than me, he would be content to be in their arms and wanted that person's attention all to himself. The growling was basically a territorial reaction and saying that he wanted this person all to himself. In fact, he would even growl if George or I reached out to touch him while someone else was holding him.

Thus, my saying "he is a flat leaver".

Freddie loves everybody.

The more attention they give him, the more he will perform for them and give them many doggie kisses. I am very fortunate that everyone he has met is an animal lover and loves every minute of his warm greetings. When we have houseguests, Freddie completely leaves us alone and jumps into their laps. I always was under the impression that toy breeds were friendly, but also a one person dog. Freddie has proved me wrong and I think letting others pick him up right away has helped him become a more social dog.

Again, would others think Freddie is a flat leaver or a lover, or is his Mommy a just a little bit jealous?