Buster, the Jack Russell

Buster, our one-year-old Jack Russell, hates mornings. Every day as I'm getting out of bed, he gives me a look of, "you must be kidding, I'll stay in bed awhile longer." And then he scurries under the covers, all the while making a pitiful growling murmur of "please, please, let me sleep a little more." If he can't find the covers, he buries his nose under a corner of a pillow.

It's hard to believe when you see Buster in the morning that this is the same big bad JR that was running and barking with such intensity and energy the night before.

Every night about 8:30 he starts getting wound up. For entertainment he runs frantically through the house, coming to screeching halts so his momentum carries him sliding across the floor, almost like he's starring in his own cartoon. He does this over and over. If he could talk he'd be saying, "hey guys watch this slide."

Sometimes he chases his tail, usually catching it. Catching the tail is not the hard part, however, it's what to do with it once he's caught it. He looks around, tail in his mouth, trying to figure out what to do next. Then, while he's pondering, the tail slips from his grip, and the chase begins again.

No matter how much we play with him, it's not enough. We could play with him for days at a time until he dropped dead from exhaustion.

He eats everything. We ought to call him Hoover or Brooks Robinson; nothing gets by him. I bet if you cut his stomach open it would look like a shark's, with things like bottles and license plates in there. We worry greatly about him eating anything and everything that fits in his mouth, such as pens, reading glasses, paper clips, and an odd assortment of bits of plastic. You never know how many small plastic items are floating around out there until you catch Buster chewing on them.

Often when he has something in his mouth that he knows he's not supposed to have, he'll look at us, make eye contact, and immediately race for the bed. In that instant of eye contact Buster's eyes seem to light up with a look of "oh $&@%! He knows the only chance of keeping his goodie from our prying fingers is to dart under the bed before we stop him. He doesn't even wait for us to make a move. The eye contact moment instantly starts the race, like someone shouting Go! Whoever gets the fastest start usually wins.

The kingside bed, packed with under-bed storage boxes, offers great hiding places for Buster and whatever he's chewing on. He knows there's security in those nooks and crannies among the under-bed boxes.

When he wins, we have to get down on the floor and look under the bed with a flashlight to try to see him. Eventually we get him and whatever he's chewing. We're always amazed at how he finds so many bad things to chew on.

His attitude is, "I must be attended to, for I am Buster." We should have a little doggie crown and a regal purple cushion made for him. It's all about him, and keeping him entertained. I don't think we're very good in the dog training field. We've tried, but it's not working. Buster usually doesn't do anything we tell him to do. It's almost as if he's deaf. Except if we have doggie bacon strips. Then he'll sit and do a few basic commands.

Paul N. Herbert ([pnh9202@verizon.net](mailto:pnh9202@verizon.net))