

No matter what you may think of his big white hat, canary-yellow sports jacket and plaid slacks, Broadway Sam is "a very couth guy that was born and brought up"

SOME celebrities will go to great lengths to deny their lofty status. Others will admit only reluctantly that they are of the elect. But Broadway Sam Roth will fight at the drop of a hint that his autograph isn't worth the paper it's written on.

Did someone ask, "Who the devil is Broadway Sam, anyway?" Someone begging for a bust on the beezer? One might just as well ask, "What is Broadway?" In fact, there's even some question of which came first, the street or the man.

Members of the older generation insist that Sam was named for the street. Jealousy, perhaps. Anyone who has been around Times Square even since Father Duffy's statue was unveiled knows that "Broadway" derived its name from the dismounted cowboy of Dimout Gulch. And as for there being any doubt as to his status as a celebrity, well, Broadway Sam can get you two for Oklahoma! but on the aisle yet.

Sam Roth is probably the only character in the business who started out in life with the avowed purpose of becoming a celebrity. Now, after twenty years on Broadway as a ticket broker, he is as sure of his position as Churchill, if not Churchill Downs.

Thousands of visitors to New York have seen Sam Roth without knowing him. Thousands more know him without seeing him. Either way suits Sam, whose roaring raiment makes Joseph, the Biblical lad who invented sports jackets, an also ran in the Sartorial Stakes. Many visiting Rotarians, seeing "Broadway" swaggering down his street, a ten-gallon hat crowning his six feet four inches of solid manhood, and a gaudy silk kerchief tied around his neck to set off his flaming tweeds or flannels, have mistaken him for a big cowboy from the West. And he is from the West, too—the west forties. But the only rope this synthetic cowboy ever handles is the big cigar which always projects in a southwesterly direction from the left corner of his mouth.

Sam Roth was one of a brood of fourteen, reared in poverty on Sheriff Street in New York's ghetto, by an Austrian tailor. As a boy, he helped to support the thirteen other little Roths by juggling huge cakes of ice at the Fulton fish mar-



## Sam Made the Pants Too Loud

**By Dan Parker**

PHOTOGRAPHED FOR COLLIER'S  
BY JERRY COOKE

ket and heavy sacks of mail at the central post office. That's what gave him the wonderful physique which, even after two decades of soft living, causes New Yorkers to turn as Broadway Sam struts by, toeing in to look bowlegged, and exclaim, "Oh, boy! What a built!"

When Sam was sixteen, the late Charley Levy, a Broadway ticket broker, hired him as an errand boy. Down on the East Side, Sam had always dreamed of being a Broadway big shot. Now, when he found himself thrown into the dizzy theatrical whirl, the overgrown lad set out deliberately to outdo the motley crowd of exhibitionists and extroverts with whom he daily came in contact. His first step was to buy himself a carnation every day be-

fore going to work. For twenty years, come hailstones, holocausts or halitosis, Broadway Sam has faithfully lived up to his motto: "A carnation a day keeps oblivion away." Although Sam can now afford a gardenia or even an orchid, he prefers to remain the poor man's Grover Whalen by sticking to his humble carnation.

However, it wasn't the carnation alone that made Sam the great celebrity he now acknowledges himself to be. Thinking it over, he gives at least half the credit to the—shall we say radical?—clothes he wears. He goes in for such sartorial monstrosities as canary-yellow sports jackets, book-makers' checks and plaids, bright-colored silk shirts bearing his monogram and coat

of arms (a herring rampant), brilliant neckerchiefs, white felt hats with wide brims, and other creations that would give the spectrum itself grounds for an infringement suit.

"Why do you buy such bizarre clothes?" Sam was asked once.

"Don't make Broadway Sam look like a discouth fellow," he replied. "He don't buy his clothes in a bazaar. Broadway's clothes are all order-made by his private tailor, who never makes the pants too long for Sam."

One of Sam's idiosyncrasies is that he always refers to himself in the third person, as if he were someone else. As a matter of fact, he is—a creature of his own imagination.

There were thousands of Sams on Broadway when Broadway Sam arrived on the Gulch, and there were even scores of Sam Roths, but only one of them, our shy hero (he's shy some of his hair), was connected with the Broadway Ticket Agency. Naturally the gangling lad with the "poissonality plus" immediately became known as Broadway Sam. That's the way with Broadway the street—I mean, original.

Although Sam's clothes speak loudly, he is inarticulate. When he calls up a newspaper to give a story about his latest contribution to charity—of which he is strongly in favor—he is likely to get the predicate before the subject, if indeed he

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# The Malignant Mattress

BY HILDA COLE ESPY

Fitzzy wanted desperately to laugh but tact restrained her. "My goodness!" she choked. "Are you all right?" Tom gave her a look of tormented dignity

ILLUSTRATED BY TOD DRAZ



Stories have been written about ladies attacked by megrims, by Nazis, by dragons even—but this is probably the first about a lady who was attacked by a mattress. And a persistent mattress it was, too

FITZY watched Josephine's mattress as if it were a trussed corpse falling out of a closet. Slowly its binding cords broke and it pitched forward, seeming for a moment to spring at Fitzzy. Then it sprawled on the floor of her one-room apartment.

Fitzzy screamed and jumped, backing into a small tableful of plants which tipped, then crashed. So she screamed again. Then she did a kind of stamping jig on the floor and howled like a dog at a 'possum hunt. She was a little girl, about five feet tall, wearing a housecoat with great big daisies on it and a pair of horn-rimmed glasses which also seemed big on so small a person. Her eyes and her fists were both clenched shut and she was howling and jiggling up and down when the doorbell rang.

The rapidity with which Fitzzy seized control would have astonished a Yogi. For an instant she stopped breathing altogether. Then she stepped forward, breathing evenly, and opened the apartment door.

It serves me right, Fitzzy thought as she looked up at the tall, solemn Air Corps boy who stood in her doorway. She

should have known the indulgent good angel of the Fitzpatricks would send her a man in this extremity. Instead of trusting to luck she had gotten all riled up and now here he was and here she was, a perfect sight, with her eyes damp and her hands pushing her hair back.

"Hello," said Fitzzy.

"Hello," said two voices. And then she realized that he wasn't alone. He was practically as tall as a church steeple and his little comrade was on another level, so Fitzzy had taken no notice of her until now. She was a lovely little blonde with taffy hair and the complexion of a three-year-old child and a superior little smile which seemed to say, "Roses are red, violets are blue, and I am about six times cuter than you."

"My name is Tom Scott," the Air Corps man was saying. "Becky Scott's brother."

"Well, for goodness' sakes!" exclaimed Fitzzy. Now she was wondering how she could get out of inviting them into her ravaged living room.

He grinned. "I told Becky I'd look you up." He made an awkward gesture. "This is Miss Barker."

"How do you do, Miss Barker?" Fitzzy sized her up as a deb—as an anything-but-poor little rich girl. "Won't you come in and have a beer—or at least a cigarette?" She stepped aside to let them in. "My—my apartment is a little upset."

"Well, we'll just stay a few seconds." Tom masterfully swung Miss Barker through the door ahead of him. "Thought you might like to know the latest about Becky. She's expecting a baby."

"No! It seems just like yesterday we

were holding up our end of the daisy chain and making plans for our futures—"

Fitzzy's voice trailed off as she watched Miss Barker picking her way through the debris like a fastidious pussycat. She chose a little Victorian chair and proceeded to sit for her portrait in it.

"Say," Tom Scott frowned, noticing the mattress. "What happened?"

He had a simple, but somehow world-shaking voice.

"I have an old school friend, Josephine," Fitzzy replied starkly. "Your sister, Becky, would know her. Well, when Josephine broke up her home here to be an Army wife, she parked furniture with all her friends. I got her mattress."

TOM SCOTT glanced at Fitzzy's hand, reaching out for the cigarette box. She knew that he had seen it tremble. Tom understood that tremble. He came from the same sort of large family she did, where mother occasionally "got upset" and sisters frequently wept. Since she was trying to sound smartly humorous, the fact that he understood her perfectly was galling.

"Now Josephine is settled," Fitzzy went on, catching her breath, "and so she wants her mattress again. So I was trying to roll it and tie it and tag it for traveling. Then the strings broke and it sprang at me."

Tom was shaking his head in male amusement. She had forgotten that men often saw something funny in situations which would seem to her to be all pathos and a yard wide. But then she had practically forgotten what men were like since all of her beaux got into uniform.

"My goodness—why didn't you get a man to help you?" Miss Barker asked. "You haven't noticed a scarcity of men?" Fitzzy countered testily.

Miss Barker skipped that, as any superior little beauty would, and Fitzzy watched Tom sail his cap across the room into her one easy chair. He unbuttoned his tunic, grinning.

"Watch me," he said.

Watching him gave Fitzzy a faint, dreamy feeling as if someone were stroking her forehead. He rolled up the mattress as if it were icebox cake, then turned his broad shoulders toward her.

"Got any cord?"

"What? Oh!" Fitzzy started. "Just what snapped off before, I have."

"Well, let's have the pieces."

Fitzzy found them on the floor and handed them to him sheepishly. "I'll tie this thing in the strategic places," he grunted, manfully suppressing the writhing mattress, "then I'll go out and rustle up some strong cord."

"Tom," Miss Barker said. Fitzzy realized, jumpily, that she had practically forgotten her. "I'm afraid we'll have to be getting along. It's after eight."

"Is it?" Tom straightened and looked apologetic. "Gee, I'm sorry to have to leave this thing like this—but Imogene's aunt went to a lot of trouble to wangle tickets for that musical show Oklahoma!"

"Why, of course," Fitzzy said. "You've been very nice."

"Of course it's temporarily okay." Tom spoke worriedly, slipping on his tunic. "But, if I were you, I'd run out and get some more cord and reinforce it."

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