

MAMA BLOOM'S BROOD

This early series (circa 1934) combines elements of the soap opera with those of the situation comedy. The episodes are fifteen minutes long and serialized as well as having a domestic focus, tending to place the show in the soap opera genre. But the treatment of plot and character is light-hearted and humorous, similar to what is found in the myriad of sitcoms that sprang up during radio's golden age.

Papa Bloom (Jake) has reached retirement age, and with some astute help from Mama (Becky) sells his kneepants factory at a nice profit. Together with their "brood"-- daughters Yetta and Sarah and sons-in-law Harold and Sidney-- they embark on an automobile trip to Hollywood to enjoy their first vacation in twenty-five years. The party has various adventures along the way. They stop at a resort hotel in Michigan, where Jake stuns even himself by proving to be a fantastically lucky bridge player. In the Arizona desert they are terrified by "Indians" (actually movie actors), but escape with scalps intact and soon reach their destination. There Jake, who Becky says is never happy unless he is worrying about something, invests in the motion picture business even though he knows nothing about it.

Mama Becky Bloom is a delightful character, much like Molly in "The Goldbergs," with which this series has been compared. She speaks with a heavy Yiddish accent and has trouble with both American English and history. In the desert, she tells Jake that they probably won't see any Indians because she's pretty sure that General Custer killed all of them! She also peppers her speech with fractured platitudes like "you can't make a zebra change his spots" and "you shouldn't go to the well with the same bucket once too many times."

The program was syndicated about 1934 by Broadcasters Program Syndicate/Bruce Eells and Associates.