

Created in 1953 by writer George Lefferts and starring Frank Sinatra in the lead, *Rocky Fortune* followed the exploits of a marginally employed jack-of-all-trades Rocko Fortunato, or Rocky Fortune. Considered a second-rate show even when it aired, the series found Sinatra at the nadir of popularity after his 1940s crooning heights and just before his career was rekindled with his role in *From Here to Eternity*.

The scripts, mostly by George Lefferts and Ernest Kinoy, often stretched the limits of believability, taking Fortune from jobs as a social director at a Catskills resort to transporting a truck of nitroglycerine across the country. Sinatra's cool, somewhat flippant persona brought the audience along for a fun ride and made it easier to overlook sometimes absurd situations.

There was little continuity over the series' run. Despite not being able to keep a job for more than a single episode, Fortune always had the license, certification, or union card necessary for the next job. The only other recurring character was the dim-witted police Sergeant Hamilton J. Finger, played by Barney Phillips, who always called his precinct headquarters "the Irish clubhouse." For reasons never fully explained, Fortune always had a direct line to the Sergeant and at times even barked orders to the beat cops under Finger's supervision.

NBC never found a sponsor for the show but the writers frequently found a way to work the title of Sinatra's new movie, *From Here to Eternity*, into the story. *Rocky Fortune* aired 25 times over 26 weeks on NBC October 6, 1953 to March 30, 1954. All the episodes are available in nice sound and represent a real treat for fans of Frank Sinatra.