

**Edited Version of Longfellow Deeds' Statement to the
Court in "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" 1936**

LONGFELLOW

Well, I don't know where to begin. There's been so many things said about me that I--

About my playing the tuba. Seems like a lot of fuss has been made about that. If a man's crazy just 'cause he plays the tuba, then somebody better look into it, 'cause there are a lot of tuba players running around loose. Of course, I don't see any harm in it. I play mine whenever I want to concentrate. That may sound funny to some people - but everybody does something silly when they're thinking. For instance, the Judge here is an O-filler ...

JUDGE

A what?

LONGFELLOW

An O-filler. You fill in all the spaces in the O's, with your pencil.

That may make you look a little crazy, Your Honor, just sitting around filling in O's - but I don't see anything wrong 'cause that helps you to think. Other people are doodlers.

JUDGE

Doodlers?

LONGFELLOW

That's a name we made up back home for people who make foolish designs on paper when they're thinking. It's called doodling. Almost everybody's a doodler. Did you ever see a scratch pad in a telephone booth? People draw the most idiotic pictures when they're thinking. Dr. Von Holler, here, could probably think up a long name for it, because he doodles all the time.

Looks kind of stupid, doesn't it, Your Honor? But I guess that's all right if Dr. Von Holler has to doodle to help him think. That's his business. Everybody does something different. Some people are--

(demonstrates)

ear-pullers - some are nail-biters--

So you see, everybody does silly things to help them think.

(in conclusion)

Well, I play the tuba.

CEDAR

Your Honor, this is becoming farcical. I demand that Mr. Deeds dispense with side remarks and confine himself to facts! Let him explain his wanderings around the streets in underclothes, his feeding doughnuts to horses!

JUDGE'S VOICE

Proceed.

LONGFELLOW

Mr. Cedar's right. Those things do look kind of bad, don't they? But to tell the truth, Your Honor, I don't remember them. I guess they happened, all right, because I don't think a policeman would lie about a thing like that, but I was drunk. It was the first time I was ever drunk in my life. It's probably happened to you, some time. I mean, when you were younger, of course.

Now about the Falkner sisters. That's kind of funny. I mean about Mr. Cedar going all the way to Mandrake Falls to bring them here.

LONGFELLOW

Jane, who owns the house you live in?

JANE

Why, you own it, Longfellow.

AMY

Yes, you own it.

LONGFELLOW'S VOICE

Do you pay any rent?

JANE

(after conferring with Amy)

No, we don't pay any rent.

AMY

Good heavens, no! We never pay rent.

LONGFELLOW

Now, Jane, a little while ago you said I was pixilated. Do you still think so?

JANE

(after the usual conference)

Why, you've always been pixilated, Longfellow.

AMY

Always.

LONGFELLOW

(smiling)
That's fine. I guess maybe I am.
(seriously)
Now tell me something, Jane. Who else in
Mandrake Falls is pixilated?

JANE
Why, everybody in Mandrake Falls is
pixilated - except us.

AMY
Uh-huh.

JUDGE
Mr. Deeds, you haven't yet touched upon a most
important thing. This rather fantastic idea of
yours to want to give away your entire fortune.
It is, to say the least, most uncommon.

LONGFELLOW
Oh yes, I was getting to that, Your Honor.

CAMERA MOVES TO CLOSER SHOT, featuring Longfellow and judge, as
former continues:

LONGFELLOW
Suppose you were living in a small town and
getting along fine, and suddenly somebody
dropped \$20,000,000 in your lap. Supposing you
discovered that all that money was messing up
your life, was bringing a lot of vultures around
your neck, and making you lose faith in
everybody. You'd be a little worried, wouldn't
you? You'd feel that you had a hot potato in
your hand, and you'd want to drop it. I guess
Dr. Von Holler would say you were riding on--
(points to chart)
--those bottom waves, 'cause you wanted to drop
something that was burning your fingers.

CEDAR
(shouting)
If this man is permitted to carry out his plan,
repercussions will be felt that will rock the
foundations of our entire governmental system!

LONGFELLOW
Personally, I don't know what Mr. Cedar's
raving about. From what I can see, no matter
what system of government we have, there will
always be leaders and always be followers.

It's like the road out in front of my house.
It's on a steep hill. Every day I watch the
cars climbing up. Some go lickety-split up that
hill on high--some have to shift into second - and some
sputter and shake and slip back to the bottom

again. Same cars - same gasoline - yet some make it and some don't. And I say the fellows who can make the hill on high should stop once in a while and help those who can't.

That's all I'm trying to do with this money. Help the fellows who can't make the hill on high.

What does Mr. Cedar expect me to do with it? Give it to him - and a lot of other people who don't need it?

(rising; sarcastically)

If you don't mind, Your Honor, I'll ride on those top waves for a minute.

(calls out)

Hey, all you fellows out there! All those who applied for a farm, stand up!

360. REVERSE ANGLE
Showing most of the audience struggling to their feet.

LONGFELLOW

See all those fellows? They're the ones I'm trying to help. They need it!

(pointing)

Mr. Cedar and that Mr. Semple don't need anything. They've got plenty! It's like I'm out in a big boat and I see one fellow in a rowboat who's tired of rowing and wants a free ride and another fellow who's drowning. Who would you expect me to rescue? Mr. Cedar, who just got tired of rowing and wants a free ride? Or those men out there who are drowning? Any ten-year old child will give you the answer to that.

(to farmers, etc. - in courtroom)

All right, fellows. Thank you. Sit down.

Now, my plan is very simple. I was going to give each family ten acres - a horse, a cow and some seed. And if they work the farm for three years, it's theirs. Now, if that's crazy, maybe I ought to be sent to an institution. But I don't think it is. And what's more, Mr. Cedar doesn't either.

(vehemently)

Just before the hearing started, he offered to call the whole thing off if I made a settlement with him. So you see, he wouldn't think I was crazy if he got paid off.