

The Power of One

Characters

Narrator

Loodle-Doodle Leader

Loodle-Doodle First Lieutenant

Loodle-Doodle Second Lieutenant

Meela

Moey

Barlos

Mr. Fusgrove

Scene 1

NARRATOR (Byron, offstage): A half century ago, on a far-away planet called . . . Loodle Doodle, the president's council holds a very important meeting.

LOODLE-DOODLE LEADER (Jessie): We must take over planet Earth. It is the key to our taking over the entire universe! Look! *She points to a map of the planets in the universe she plans to take over—four red circles and a big Earth in the shape of a five-point star.* Once we get Earth, we'll have a star! And that would make my map very pretty.

LOODLE DOODLE FIRST LIEUTENANT (Arlene): Who cares what shape it makes? Do we really want to take over the Earth? They're so whiny down there.

LOODLE DOODLE SECOND LIEUTENANT (Byron): I don't know. I think they're kind of cute. Look at that thing they just invented—what do they call it—a tel-ee-vision? I mean they sing, they dance—they're adorable!

LEADER: No! It's not about adorable! And I don't care whether earthlings whine. In order to be the most powerful aliens in the universe—and to make my map look like a pretty star—I must take over the Earth! And I know exactly how to do it! Listen up, my good council, the secret to taking over the Earth is to . . . allow them to destroy the planet themselves! I don't care if it's a big, brown chunk of smoking rock, it still makes me a pretty star.

FIRST LIEUTENANT: Why would earthlings destroy their own planet? That makes no sense!

LEADER: Oh, but they already are, my good friend, they already are. Look at all the factories, the pollution, the waste that is happening there. It is only a matter of time!

SECOND LIEUTENANT: Hmm, but how can we be sure they won't stop all that polluting? I mean, won't they realize what they're doing and change? They're pretty smart. They invented this little box that you can stare at and be entertained by, without talking to anyone, or getting any

exercise at all. You just sit there eating potato chips and getting lazy . . . *voice trails off*. Hmm. Maybe not so smart.

LEADER: I have the answer, my friends. And this is why I am the leader and you are the lieutenants. The answer is . . . *pause, pronounce with a long "a"* . . . the power of a one!

FIRST LIEUTENANT: The answer . . . is steak sauce?

LEADER: No! Let me rephrase: the Power of One! *Stretches up both hands above head in triumph*. The power of one will make sure that they destroy their own planet. The only problem is that there is a single weakness in this power. Let me explain. *The three huddle together and whisper as the scene ends*.

Scene 2

NARRATOR: Fast-forward *makes fast-forward/zooming noises* to today. The Leader's Council sits together watching the planet Earth on their special crystal ball.

FIRST LIEUTENANT: *Excited*. It's working! It's working! The Power of One!

SECOND LIEUTENANT: Wow! One plastic bottle thrown away here, one Styrofoam tray thrown away there, one trash can full of paper dumped into a landfill instead of recycled, this is all it takes. One here, one there, one everywhere. And soon, everyone's doing it! Everyone is contributing to the destruction of their own planet! And because they do it one at a time, no one thinks that what they're doing makes any difference! Who would have thought this would ever work?

LEADER: *Clears throat*. Me! That's who! It's only a matter of time now.

FIRST LIEUTENANT: But what about the weakness?

LEADER: Well, so far, the weakness hasn't happened. Maybe we'll have a run of good luck, and it never will. And then, the pretty little five-point star will be mine, all mine! *Evil laugh*.

SECOND LIEUTENANT: But wait! What's going on down there? *All three bend closer to their crystal ball*. That's a school. Let me see if I can read it . . . yes, Greenwood School. Something's happening there, Leader! Look!

Scene 3

Greenwood School playground

MEELA, MOEY, AND BARLOS: *Chanting, marching in a circle, like at a protest or rally, carrying signs supporting "green" efforts.* One bottle, one tray, that's all it takes to save the day! One tray, one can, to save the Earth, that is our plan!

MEELA: *Calling out to group.* Come on people! All it takes is *one*. Just each *one* of you, if you do your part, we can make a difference, a big difference!

MR FUSGROVE: *Puts arm around shoulders of Moey and Meela.* You kids are just wonderful. What would Greenwood School do without you? Thank you for leading our community in this campaign to save the planet. How can we show our gratitude?

MOEY: Well, Mr. Fusgrove, how about we switch things around: vacation for nine months, school for three?

MR FUSGROVE: A fabulous idea, son! That way, you can do more to save Mother Earth!

MEELA, MOEY, BARLOS: Hip-hip hooray! *Chanting again.* One bottle, one can, one Styrofoam tray. That's all it takes to save the day! *Mr. Fusgrove smiles proudly. An angry voice is heard from off-stage.*

LEADER: Drat, drat, and double-drat!

BARLOS: Did you hear something?

MEELA: *Crosses arms, looks angry.* Did somebody call me fat? *The three aliens from Loodle Doodle move onstage, from stage left. The Greenwood students continue to march in a small circle, not noticing the aliens.*

LEADER: The weakness! It happened! The . . . *said in a disgusted voice* KIDS found out!

FIRST LIEUTENANT: The weakness! These darn kids never believe anything they're told. It's like they have minds of their own!

SECOND LIEUTENANT: How dare they think for themselves!

LEADER: The kids are using our own secret Power of One weapon against us. They must be stopped! *Leader races toward the students, with the two Council following behind.* Stop this nonsense! Stop this instant! *The students are startled at first, but then they crowd together to face the aliens in defense.*

BARLOS: First of all, who *are* you, and I don't believe we need to stop anything. We have permission to be here and speak our minds.

LEADER: That's the problem! You young people are always *makes dramatic air quotes and in a whiny voice* "speaking your minds." Why don't you just do what you're told? That's what kids do on our planet, and that's why we're about to take over the whole universe, because we have *shouts like a rap singer* order in the house!

SECOND LIEUTENANT: Please forgive our Leader's manners, *reaches out to shake Barlos's hand* I'm second lieutenant, and this is my best bud, first lieutenant. The screaming one is our leader.

MEELA: You're from another planet?! Did you bring Yoda?

SECOND LIEUTENANT: No way, he's too high-maintenance to travel with! He needs a special booster seat in the rocket ship so he can see out the window, and then he keeps zinging objects all around just to show off the Force. Totally annoying.

LEADER: Enough! Puh-lease! Can we get to the point?! We demand that you stop protesting and go back to doing what everybody else was doing, throwing things away and wasting stuff!

MOEY: We will not! We demand that you go back to doing whatever it is you were doing, taking care of Yogi Bear or whoever.

MEELA: *Laughing, leaning toward Moey.* It's Yo-Da!

BARLOS: With all due respect, we'll do what has to be done to stand up for what we believe in. And you can't stop us.

FIRST LIEUTENANT: Oh yeah? What are three little kids going to do against three tough aliens?

BARLOS: Are you forgetting something? We know the Power of One. It just takes one, then one, then one, and then one. And soon you have the strength of a whole army! *Turns toward the audience.* Come stand with us if you believe in the Power of One! *Audience members come and stand with the students. The aliens scream, cry, and melt to the ground when faced with the force of the Power of One, like the Wicked Witch in the Wizard of Oz when drenched with water. Once the three are on the floor, defeated, everyone cheers and shouts "Power of One!"*

As Arlene did in the story, one actor/actress or the whole group can announce at the end of the play the quote from Margaret Mead: A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.