The King of Mkolokolo

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The King of Mkolokolo was a rich man. He had everything that his heart desired, but he was not happy.

He was worried about his people.
The people of his village, who worked in the fields, had started disappearing.

The king was afraid that the snake of Mkolokolo was back.
He called a village meeting. He called grandfathers and grandmothers, mothers and fathers, and boys and girls.

Everyone came to hear what he had to say.
“I will catch that snake!” shouted one man in the crowd.

His name was Sello, and next to him was his big dog. Sello and his dog went to the fields. They never came back again.
A few days later, Tjuma the farmer arrived at the king’s kraal* with a big cage. “I will catch that snake!” he told the king confidently.

Tjuma went to the fields with his big cage. He never came back again.

*A native village or collection of huts
A few weeks later, Heshane, who was a well-known rugby player, arrived at the palace.

With a deep voice he told the king, “I can catch the snake.” Heshane went off into the field showing off his strong muscles. He never came back again.
The king called another village meeting. He called grandfathers and grandmothers, mothers and fathers, and boys and girls.

Everyone came to hear what he had to say.
“I will give my throne to anyone who catches the snake of Mkolokolo,” declared the king.
A soft voice was heard from the crowd. The king looked out to see who had spoken.

A small girl emerged from the crowd and approached his throne. She was wearing torn clothes, shoes with holes, and a dirty hat. She told the king, “I can catch the snake.”
The crowd roared with laughter. No one could believe that a small girl like her could accomplish such a huge feat.

But the king reassured her: “If you catch the snake, I will surrender my throne to you.”
The following morning, the girl left her hut while it was still dark.

She carried a clay pot full of porridge on her head and left for the fields. The whole village waited for her to come back.
When the sun was about to set, the people in the village heard a loud sound coming from the fields.

“SHW-SHW-SHW!”

They all fled and hid, but peeped through the windows and key holes. They were terrified of the snake!
From the field emerged the small girl with her torn clothes, shoes with holes, and her dirty hat, carrying an empty pot in one arm--and the snake on the other!

She was followed by Heshane, Tjuma, Sello and his dog, and all the other people in the village who had disappeared.
The king asked her how she had managed to catch the snake.

She said, “I became its friend.”

The girl was made Queen of Mkolokolo and the snake became her pet.
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The King of Mkolokolo
(English)

The King of Mkolokolo offers his crown to anyone who can capture the snake that is tormenting his village. Mighty villagers from across the land take on the challenge. But what happens when a small girl asks for her turn?

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.

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