

Silver Hoof

1. A long time ago in Russia, there lived a lonely old hunter named Yuri who adopted a poor orphan girl named Olga. Olga's only friend was a skinny kitten.
2. The three of them were poor but they were happy. Yuri hunted while Olga cooked and cleaned. At night, Yuri told tales about a magical goat with huge antlers and one silver hoof, called Silver Hoof. It was said that each time he stamped his foot, he left precious gems behind.
3. One day, Yuri decided to go into the forest to find Silver Hoof. He took Olga and the cat with him. They stayed in an old cabin and each day Yuri went out to hunt goats, hoping to find Silver Hoof.
4. After many months, Yuri had collected many goat skins but he still had not found Silver Hoof. He decided to go to town to get a horse to transport all the skins home. The journey would take him three days.
5. On the second day alone in the cabin, Olga heard a noise outside. When she opened the door, she saw Silver Hoof, but he ran away.
6. On the third day, Olga let the kitten out to play, but he did not return. After a long wait, Olga went out to search for him. To her surprise, she found him nearby in a clearing in the forest with Silver Hoof. They were nodding their heads and appeared to be having a conversation. Then they ran around and stamped in the snow around the cabin and on the roof. Everywhere Silver Hoof stamped, colourful gems landed, until they completely covered the cabin.
7. At that moment, Yuri returned from town. He was amazed to see his old cabin covered in gems. As soon as they saw him, Silver Hoof and the cat disappeared from the rooftop. The old man gathered some gems in his hat and took them inside.
8. The next morning, Yuri and Olga ran outside to look at the gems covering the cabin, but they had all disappeared. The only ones remaining were those the old man had collected in his hat.
9. With those gems, Yuri and Olga were able to live comfortably for the rest of their lives, but Silver Hoof and the kitten were never seen again. However, sometimes people still discover gems in the clearing where the goat plays during the night.

