

Affectionate Friends

As fun as they are beautiful, Birmans are almost magic.

By Elisa Jordan

Centuries ago, lovely white cats lived peacefully alongside their masters in Burmese Buddhist temples. Marauders, intent on stealing the riches believed to be inside, ransacked one temple in particular, killing one of the priests in the process. His ever-faithful feline companion placed its paws on the priest and gazed into the blue eyes of a golden goddess statue. The cat's yellow eyes turned the same blue as those of the golden goddess, and its legs, face, tail and ears darkened. The paws that rested on the priest, however, remained white as a symbol of the man's purity. Some say the cat refused to leave its master's side and finally died of a broken heart.

Though legend, this charming story perfectly captures the essence of the Birman. These beautiful pointed cats are gentle souls that loyally involve themselves in every aspect of their humans' lives.

"They're very people-oriented," says Arkansas-based Paula Watson, who has bred Birmans under the cattery name Bitaveen with her husband, James, for about 15 years. "If you're cooking, they're in the kitchen. If you're on the computer, they're by you on the computer. If they're not in your lap, they're on the arm of the chair or next to you curled up or behind you on the back of the chair."

****For the full article, pick up the January issue of CAT FANCY****

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