



Miranda James

Cat in the Stacks mysteries

Diesel Speaks...

The first thing any human ever notices about me is my size. They've usually never seen a cat like me before. I'm a Maine Coon, and we can get to be pretty big -- and I'm not talking about overeating and being obese, thank you. Male Maine Coons like me can weigh as much as twenty-five pounds, but I guess my parents must have been larger than average. I'm about three now -- in human time, that is -- and the last time Charlie (my human) took me to the vet and they weighed me I was a bit over thirty-six pounds.

What I hear most when people see me the first time is: "What is that thing? Is it a dog?" (Actually, since this is the Deep South, it sounds more like "What is that thang? Is it a dawg?") Charlie smiles and explains about Maine Coons while I stare politely at them.

Cats can read character, and I'm particularly sensitive to humans. I like them. They can be really amusing, and they like to scratch my head and behind my ears. That's okay by me, as long as their claws aren't too long.

Charlie, my human, is a nice man. He feeds me well and takes me with him just about everywhere he goes -- though I usually have to wear a harness and be on a leash. Charlie ought to know by now that I'm perfectly well-behaved and won't go running off without him. But evidently there's something called a law here in Athena, Mississippi, that says he has to do it if I'm out in public. I can see the point with dogs -- they'll go running off just to roll around in something nasty -- but truly intelligent cats like me wouldn't.

Life with Charlie was calm the first couple of years, but lately strange things have been happening. He seems to have this ability to find dead humans, and then he gets us both involved in finding out who killed them. Charlie's smart -- he's a librarian, whatever that is, and evidently they're all pretty

sharp in the mental department. I help whenever I can, of course, but I'm not that fond of dead humans. Dead birds and mice, yes, because at least they're edible.

This person called Miranda James has been writing up Charlie's and my adventures in mystery-solving, so you can read about us if you like. The titles are *Murder Past Due* and *Classified as Murder*. Miranda finally got around to telling the story of our third mystery, *File M for Murder*, and it's available now.

It's dinnertime, and I'm going to see if I can charm the humans out of some tidbits. Nice chatting with you.

www.CatInTheStacks.com