

owl Play

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by John Haley

It is with sincere regret (and hopefully increased distribution) that this publication must inform you that a key member of the Ambrosia team has been implicated in a heinous crime. Hector D. Byrd has been taken into custody and is being held without bail (too much of a flight risk). The charge is murder in the first degree. This criminal investigation focused on a well known celebrity threatens to overshadow even the recent O.J. case.

The death of Hector's live in lover, Nala Lachat, came as a serious blow to the whole Ambrosia staff. Ambrosia is relatively small as companies go, and a co-worker's friends or family quickly become accepted into the group. Nala had been in and out of the office on a regular basis, getting to know everyone. She always offered a friendly smile, and would patiently sit with you while you worked. She will be missed.

Other staffers at Ambrosia did not know much about Hector and Nala's home life. They seemed happy enough, especially in the pictures Hector proudly displayed.

ut everyone knew Hector was not the easiest person to live with. Hector was prone to dark moods, and visitors to his cage were always dismayed at the mess. I guess no one was really surprised when the couple split up. Nala was just tired of the un-tidy conditions and restrictive confines of Hectors place, so she moved out.

Hector did not take this well at first. He went on a rampage, making a lot of noise and throwing things out of his cage. Then he settled into one of his darker moods. Co-workers would try to coax him out, for a day on the perch. But he would have none of it, preferring to sit at home a brood. Gradually one by one his friends stopped calling.

Nala still visited the Ambrosia offices, and continued to build upon the friendships she had established. The separation did not effect her in the same way as Hector, she saw it as a chance to grow and explore new horizons. At first Hector did not react to Nala's continued presence in the office. But then it became increasingly apparent that the passion that he had put into their love had been redirected to a darker place in his heart.

On October 15, 1994 Nala stopped by the Ambrosia offices for a visit in the late afternoon. No one noticed the fire smoldering behind Hector's dark eyes as Nala happily chatted with one of Hector's co-workers. At the time, no one thought better of it, but one by one the other staffers departed for home until Nala was left alone with Hector and his demons. She was last seen alive at 8:35 pm.

Hector is usually in the office well before any of the other Ambrosia staff, but on the day after Nala's last visit, he was conspicuously absent. Instead John Haley arrived after an early morning pit stop at the local donut shop. Those jelly donuts did not last to long inside of John's stomach. Nala's badly beaten and mutilated body was found just three feet from Hector's perch. Blood stains were found throughout the office as well as all over the outside hall, the elevator and on the edge of a public bird bath located behind the office complex.

ato Cajun arrived soon after. Although not the first on the scene, his surprise was no less grisly; blood and half digested jelly donut covered a good portion of the office. After checking for vital signs, Cajun immediately called in the authorities. Ambrosia's President, Andrew Welch was notified of the crime and sped to the office. John, Cajun and Andrew all attempted to contact Hector to break the bad news, but Hector was nowhere to be found. Very soon it was not just Ambrosia that was interested in one Hector D. Byrd's whereabouts.

When the cops made it clear that they were interested in Hector as a suspect, and not just a friend of the victim, the Ambrosia staff was shocked and dismayed. Hector was a close friend, and what ever happened to the concept of innocent until proven guilty? After all, Hector could never do something as evil as this. Well, Hector most likely would probably not do something like this. Hum, Hector would have to be severely provoked to do something like this? Aw heck, "He's in the other room guys."

What followed was a slow speed chase (African Grey parrots move even slower than white Ford Broncos) around the Ambrosia offices. Authorities would have closed in, but Hector kept repeating "hello...I'll end it, hello...I'll end it." The police almost nabbed him by the water cooler, but the confusion created by the congregation of idle employees allowed Hector to duck under the conference table and evade the dragnet temporarily.

Finally Hector stopped outside of his cage and a tense stand off followed. Although significantly smaller than most of those present, authorities knew that suspects in an emotionally distraught state were like time bombs just waiting to go off. Of course Hector would only qualify as a firecracker, but he was still pretty intimidating. The police sharpshooters were useless, having been blinded by media strobe lights. Authorities resorted to psychological tactics and began reading DOS source code over their public address system. Soon Hector, and the rest of the Ambrosia staff were lulled into a catatonic state. Thus began Hector's life behind bars. Well, bigger bars.

Stay tuned for the dramatic trial featured in the January Ambrosia Times. Will Hector go free? Will fellow Ambrosians testify for or against the jailed bird? Will Nala suddenly come back to life like a soap star? Is it true Andrew only changes socks twice a week? These and other mystifying questions will all be answered in the next issue.