

HEALING, HURTING AND PAYING THE PRICE



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"We had an excellent jury that paid very close attention," said Zaffirni. The plaintiff, Cristina, gave signs of relief and said that justice was served. "I have a lot of compassion for her (Ana Maria)," Cristina said, as she conferred with her attorneys and immediate family members. "We have so many lessons to learn and I just hope that she has learned from this."

Ana Maria and her attorneys, Horace Hall and Alberto Alarcon, were not present at the reading of the jury's verdict. However, defense co-counsel Gustavo Quintanilla and Guillermo Alarcon were present. They commented that in their opinion, the jury equivocated their verdict.

Testimony showed that in 1990, Cristina had given Don Juan about \$34 million to invest on her behalf. Ana Maria, through a promissory note, acknowledged having received \$4 million as a loan from Cristina. The note was due and payable on Sept. 28, 1998, and bears past due interest at the rate of 1.5 percent per month.

Along with a note was a guaranty, signed by Ana Maria, which would guarantee payment of the loan with money she had in several accounts. The jury heard testimony that the documents were presented to Cristina at her home in the presence of her father, Don Juan, Ana Maria, Cristina's husband, and two of Ana Maria's nephews. Throughout the course of the trial, Ana Maria repeatedly denied that she signed a promissory note and guaranty agreement. She claimed that letterheads bearing her signature were stolen from her office. Cristina and other plaintiffs counted the defendant's witnesses, however, discounted the defendant's claims of the stolen documents throughout the days and weeks of testimony.

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FRIDAY, May 18, 2001

Heiress wins big in court



BY ERICK SANTOS
Times staff writer

A 34th District Court jury Thursday found in favor of the plaintiff, a Monterey heiress, in a lawsuit in which the plaintiff was seeking payment of \$4 million from a promissory note. The heiress, Cristina, is 19 years old and was born in Monterey. Her father, Don Juan, died in 1966. She inherited \$60 million from her father. She and her mother, Ana Maria, are the plaintiffs in the lawsuit. The lawsuit was filed by the heiress against her mother, Ana Maria, and her father, Don Juan, in 1998. The lawsuit sought payment of a \$4 million promissory note that the heiress claimed her mother had stolen from her office.

ANA MARIA, BRITTINGHAM
Cristina, which had gone unadvised several years ago. The note was due and payable on Sept. 28, 1998, and bears past due interest at the rate of 1.5 percent per month. Along with a note was a guaranty, signed by Ana Maria, which would guarantee payment of the loan with money she had in several accounts. The jury heard testimony that the documents were presented to Cristina at her home in the presence of her father, Don Juan, Ana Maria, Cristina's husband, and two of Ana Maria's nephews. Throughout the course of the trial, Ana Maria repeatedly denied that she signed a promissory note and guaranty agreement. She claimed that letterheads bearing her signature were stolen from her office. Cristina and other plaintiffs counted the defendant's witnesses, however, discounted the defendant's claims of the stolen documents throughout the days and weeks of testimony.

After Judge Elma Salinas Ender read the first few answered questions of the charge, plaintiff co-counsel Carlos Zaffirni gave a thumbs-up gesture to Cristina and her other attorneys as the findings of the jury were announced in open court.

"We are delighted with the outcome," an elated Zaffirni said. "We felt that Ana Maria and her attorneys came up with multiple excuses." Zaffirni also commended the jury for its commitment to the case. (See: HEIRSS Page 20A)