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Patrick Coulton's lawyers totally ripped him off but simple justice has prevailed. He just got out of federal prison a not long week... he's now live into his former lawyer's Miami home
By Paula McMahon, Sun Sentinel

Patrick Coulton's lawyers ripped him off to the tune of \$275,000 and left him to rot in prison. But Coulton is getting payback: He now lives in his former lawyer's home — a three-bedroom house in Miramar that he will eventually own as part of a court-ordered punishment of the two misbehaving attorneys.
"Even though they throw me under the bus ... There's a certain sense of tension about

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/miami-beach-gals-lawyers-house-20140222-03250104-story.html>

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acquiring a house in this fashion," Coulton said after moving in last week. "I almost feel sorry for them."

The way Coulton and two federal judges tell it, this is the story of two very bad lawyers Emmanuel Roy and Peter Mayas and one very good one, Paul Petruzzi.

"Guys like them are the reason people hate lawyers," Petruzzi said. "They took everything from him and his family ... I took it personally because this is what I do for a living. Lawyers are supposed to help people."

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The bizarre legal soap opera began in March 2008 when Coulton was arrested on federal drug and money-laundering charges for smuggling cocaine and marijuana.

His family hired Roy, who was a lawyer in New York and Florida at the time, and Roy brought his friend, Mayas, a Plantation attorney, on board too.

Photos: Are you a Florida transplant?

Coulton admitted responsibility, cooperated and pleaded guilty within two months of his arrest. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison with the understanding that prosecutors would later recommend his punishment would be reduced as part of his plea agreement.

He never heard from Roy and Mayas again and when prosecutors tried to give him the promised break, they couldn't get the lawyers to respond either, court records show.

Petruzzi, a Miami attorney, was brought into the case and set to work, first getting Coulton's prison sentence cut in

half. But as he delved deeper, he said he was shocked by how Roy and Mayas had ripped off Coulton and the extent of their greed.

"If there's anything I've garnered in this, it's that things have a tendency to come around in a full circle," Coulton said. "I would never have guessed it would have turned out this way in a million years."

'Outrageous' behavior

U.S. Magistrate Judge William Turnoff held numerous investigative court hearings over a couple of years to figure out what happened. He eventually issued two scorching rulings.

Roy's and Mayas' conduct was "disgusting, abhorrent" and the "most outrageous" he'd seen in

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25 years on the bench, the judge wrote. He said they lied in court, hid their assets and wasted everybody's time.

He ruled that neither man had been qualified or legally permitted to practice in federal court in South Florida and that they had wrung cash and property out of Coulton's family for doing a minimal amount of work. Petruzzi estimated the case should have cost Coulton less than \$50,000.

Among the long list of property Roy and Mayas took from Coulton were a **Coconut Creek** townhome he rented out, a Porsche Cayenne, tens of thousands of dollars in cash and jewelry including a gold medal he bought at the Vatican.

Coulton was even billed for the cost of flying Roy and his wife to England where Roy personally removed a \$23,000 wedding and engagement ring set from the finger of Coulton's then-wife, after a breakfast meeting in London, according to court testimony.

Roy had to be arrested in New York and brought to **Miami** in handcuffs where he later invoked his Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate himself more than 80 times in an hour under questioning in court by Petruzzi.

U.S. District Judge Joan Lenard who had the final say on the case ruled that Roy and Mayas must repay every cent of the \$275,000 or more they received from Coulton's family.

Though Petruzzi initially said he didn't want to be paid for his work on Coulton's behalf, the judge disagreed and ordered the pair to pay him close to \$100,000 in legal fees and costs for close to four years' worth of work.

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KCK33317 at 9:22 AM February 23, 2014

If this house is in foreclosure, #1 doesn't seem like the lawyer paid part of his debt to relinquish it and #2, won't the bank come after the house?

KCK33317 at 9:18 AM February 23, 2014

Now if they would only do the same to cops that cook up stories to solve cases.

EliotBernstein at 8:49 AM February 23, 2014

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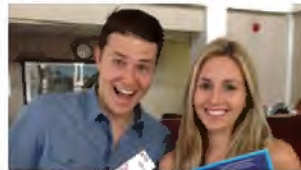
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Attorney's Fees

Ex-Lawyer Who Ignored Federal Court Order to Pay Big Bucks to Abandoned Client Is Now Jailed

Posted Aug 10, 2012 12:57 PM CST

By [Martha Neil](#)

Two lawyers found to have abandoned a client after his sentencing in a federal criminal case were not only ordered to disgorge all of the \$275,000 paid in legal fees but cover the cost of his new defense counsel.

However, U.S. Magistrate Judge William Turnoff is still trying to figure out how to force Emmanuel Roy and Peter Mayas to ante up as required by his September order, the South Florida [Sun Sentinel](#) reports.

After a time-consuming journey as a federal prisoner from New York, where Roy was arrested in mid-July, to Oklahoma to Miami, he told Turnoff on Thursday that he is now penniless. The judge set bond at \$250,000, with a \$5,000 cash requirement, and scheduled a contempt hearing on Aug. 16.

The 45-year-old Roy has voluntarily given up his New York law license and was disbarred in Florida, the article says.

Meanwhile, Mayas also has not made the required payment, attorney Paul Petruzzi, who now represents the pair's former client, Patrick Coulton, tells the newspaper.

Mayas appeared at hearings earlier this year, but his claims that he would turn over property were "empty promises," according to Petruzzi.

An earlier [Sun Sentinel](#) article gives further details about prior hearings.

Reportedly, neither Roy nor Mayas was authorized to represent clients in federal court in South Florida when they worked on Coulton's case.

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