

July 4, 2023

Dear Renato,

I heard from two of the neighbors about a dispute between my father and a gardener. Based on listening to the gardener's side of the story only, it sounded like my father refused to pay a hard working man. Yesterday, I contacted Everado (gardener). He asked to be paid \$290, which I did, the same day.

After paying Everado, I asked my father to tell his side of the story. Here's what my father said:

The gardener was to trim the vines on the side of the property (\$250) and then prune spiky branches of a palm tree. My father's only complaint about the work involved the palm tree (please refer to photo).



The argument got worse from there, but the palm tree was what started it. I do have personal experience with my father and this tree. Two days earlier, I said to him that the city wanted all vegetation encroaching the sidewalk to be removed. I advised him to remove this tree, but he replied, "No." It was a definite no because he wanted to keep the tree. So, I trimmed some of the spiky branches, but stopped when my hand got cut. When I returned for the 4th of July weekend, I saw the beheading of the tree and asked my father about it. He looked unhappy, but all he said is that the gardener did that.

After I paid the gardener (3rd of July), I told my father about it, and about the neighbors having a bad opinion of him because of the episode. I especially emphasized to him that you had a bad opinion of him based on what you heard. His response was that the dispute began with the palm tree's cutting.

I don't know the order of the escalation, but here are some of the elements of the dispute growing larger than just the palm tree:

- The gardener's wife saying f---- you to my father's face.
- My father's withholding of payment.
- The gardener dumping all the trash on the driveway.

Lastly, my father was unhappy about his car's underneath getting damaged when he backed up over the dumping. My father was my very angry when he retold the events. I told my father I would let you hear his side of the story, given his great opinion of you. Thank you, Renato. He and I appreciate all you've done for him over the years.

Best regards,
Mark Cao

(714) 699-4447