

PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA
v.
JAMES JACOBS

SUPERIOR COURT CASE NO. 26-NF-001236-B

DECLARATION

1) I am the defendant in People v. James Jacobs, case number above and I declare the following: I am not a kidnapper but a property manager who asked the police for help. This case is about a lawful move-in, not the crime the DA described.

2) Jerry Tran contacted me through my business about 260 Allen Drive in San Bruno. He told me his company, Jae Holdings Inc., had bought the property. I verified the grant deed recorded in San Mateo County on 09/12/25 as Recorder Document 2025-047718. The contract I signed with Mr. Tran allowed me to move Arthur Gutierrez Jr. into the property as a tenant & bring help. Tran told me Silvino Angel Jr. Manzano kept promising to leave but did not. Tran also told me Manzano had demanded \$65,000 to vacate the property through 'Dawn'. I later learned the demand went to \$100,000 after Manzano testified. Tran also told me about a June 3, 2025 raid at the property where illegal firearms were found and that according to neighbors those firearms were Manzano's but he was able to avoid arrest by giving police his father's name. Manzano has since been charged and is currently awaiting trial for eleven counts of unlawful firearm activity under PC §29825(b) from that raid in San Mateo County case 26-NM-001366-A. From my own research I knew Manzano was prohibited from possessing a firearm.

3) I introduced Art to Mr. Tran as the new tenant. Art owns his own squatter removal company. I subcontracted to him for a move-in and to occupy the property for 30 days. He is not my employee, partner or business owner; I have none. Art could legally own a firearm. Manzano was prohibited from possessing one. My understanding was that if Manzano had access to an unsecured firearm in the residence, especially in a house with no gun safe and rooms with no doors, police would treat that access as unlawful. Before Art moved in, Art gathered intelligence on Manzano for a couple of days so we could do the safest possible move-in. We confirmed Manzano was the only person staying at the property at that time. Art moved in with a lease on 11/27/25 when no one was at the property. After Art moved in, he and his crew watched the property over the next three days. They saw no one come by except Manzano driving past. On 11/30/25 Art, Mr. Tran and I made a video about resolving the situation. Art left that day because Manzano would not gather his belongings while Art was there. Manzano did not finish moving out. He put his things in a U-Haul his mother paid for and later moved them back into the residence. Then he moved in other squatters and altered the entrances. The squatters had no ownership, lease or right to sole possession. Art had a lease.

4) Art & I discussed our options, methods & intel. Around 1:00 a.m. on 01/06/26 we went over the move-in with the group. The plan after Art got inside was to call the police ourselves. In my experience, police often try to stay out of civil disputes, so the team and I were glad the squatters called first because it made police more likely to come. My agreement with Mr. Tran was for a lawful attempt to remove the squatters' residency rights. I carried a sheathed katana, not a firearm. Angelmike Va Regalado "Angel" was not one of my guys. Angel came through a security company owner Van Fredricks, an independent contractor I subcontracted to provide security. I chose about 2:00 a.m. on purpose. We had watched the squatters stay up at night and sleep during the day. We had already told the neighbors Art was moving back in overnight. I chose that hour to lower the chance of a physical altercation or weapon threat and reduce the chance a bystander would mistake the move-in as unlawful. We came in through the gate the squatters had nailed shut restoring access and then through the backyard door (garage entrance) which I expected to be open from our prior visit. No house door was forced. The battering ram only touched the gate.

5) Once we reached the backyard door, Art announced tenancy rights: "*We're the new tenants*" E:A2 and Van told the squatters: "*I'm going to give you 15 minutes, okay?*" E:A3. I understood that as giving people time to gather belongings while Art moved back in and not forcing squatters to leave. I did not give that deadline. The squatters agreed, George answered: "*That's fine*" E:A3. The exits stayed available: front & sliding glass doors upstairs, backyard & garage doors downstairs + the living-room door separating the stairway. When the squatters announced they were calling the cops, I said while Van followed up: "*Calling the cops, okay - Ya, please do*" E:A7. Shawna Marie McAlister then said: "*Try and come up here you'll get shot in the face*" E:A9. I took that as a threat that a squatter had a gun. Angel called to me: "*C'mon Tuesday, she threatened me*" E:A12 calling me "*Tuesday*" because he did not know my name, but he knew a katana should be backing him as per the plan. Earlier he had gone to the living-room door, could not open it & came back down without forcing it. This time he opened it by the handle. Around then I said: "*What's going on?*" E:A14-15 and Angel said: "*Move*" E:A15-16. I never told Angel to threaten anyone, point or use a gun.

6) When Angel opened that door, Manzano was the only squatter talking in the bodycam footage: "*You put that down! Right now! That's illegal. You better put that down!*" E:A16. Van kept saying: "*Calm down*" E:A16-17 & E:A22 and Art said: "*Relax!*" E:A16. To me Manzano was not pleading in distress. He was ordering Angel to put his firearm down on the ground. I did not see anyone point a firearm at anyone. The first time I saw Angel's pistol, he held it at low-ready (pointed down) E:P9. As I moved through that door, a squatter pushed the door from the other side & pinned the upper half of my body between both sides of the doorframe. My bodycam shows my right hand in an orange tactical glove braced against the door while I was pinned for about 4 seconds E:G1. A squatter grabbed and pulled my katana. I held on and pulled back E:P4 & E:P5. About 3 seconds later I freed my katana and then myself from the door with Art's help E:P5-7. The katana never left its sheath. In that moment I understood I had just witnessed several offenses: McAlister threatened to shoot us & someone grabbed my katana while pinning me to a door. I felt I could have made a citizen's arrest under PC §837, but chose not to. I cannot say for certain whose hand grabbed my sword, but I saw Manzano at that door & Art's bodycam shows him pressed against it right after Manzano asked: "*That a samurai sword?*" E:A21. Most likely it was Manzano, but I can't rule out Patrick Calleja since he "*Tried to hold the door & they kind of beat their way in*" (03/04 Preliminary). After the door struggle, I believed there could be an armed squatter in the living-room. I called the rest of the crew to come upstairs since police were on the way but many stayed downstairs: "*Come on in guys*" E:A20. Nobody mentioned squatting but Manzano denied it anyway: "*No we're not squatting... I don't need to have a lease*" E:A23.

7) Watching the bodycam afterward, in E:P1 my right hand is off my katana & braced against the door while I am pinned. My katana's handguard is hollow, so the video shows when the handle is being held. The handle is visibly empty of my hand in E:P3. In E:P4 a bare, flesh-colored hand grabs the handle. In E:P6 Angel turns toward me in a forward-ready posture with his mouth open. I saw none of this in the moment. I was focused on freeing myself & securing my weapon. Art's bodycam in E:G2 & E:P8 shows that right after I freed myself, I walked directly into the path of Angel's gun. I did not see it. No one knowingly walks into the path of a firearm. I immediately cleared the kitchen & Angel's blindspots. I said on my bodycam: "*Okay, I guess we breach & cleared. Looks like we mitigated the threat*" E:A24 and then: "*We need to go through each one of the rooms okay brother*" E:A25. Right after that I told Angel: "*You handled that strong bro*" E:A25 and put my hand on his shoulder trying to calm him after a chaotic struggle. I had not seen him point the gun at anyone. What I was reacting to was that no squatter took control of a weapon & no shots fired.

8) Breaching was obtaining access to the property, in which we entered through the gate the squatters had nailed shut. Clearing was confirming that the threat had ended in all the available rooms, which meant reducing potential threats by covering as much of the property without force to minimize hidden armed squatters. Manzano had been blocking the hallway since I entered the living-room. Cooper then came into the hallway and Manzano stopped blocking it. I took that opening and moved down the hallway right after Cooper. Angel followed me. Manzano then followed Angel down the hallway & passed both of us, reaching his room first. He stood in his own doorway for at least 5 seconds E:P10-12. Manzano closed his own bedroom door and walked back to the living-room to talk with Art. Cooper went into the only open room along the hallway, which has no door. Angel cleared that room by looking through the open doorway without going inside E:P13. After clearing the hallway, Art responded to Pat's insult: *"You guys just got done moving all your stuff back in?"* E:A28. I said: *"I just checked 100%. We're clear, we're clear"* E:A30. Manzano's argument with Art was about tenancy, not about a hostage situation: *"I don't care what you have. I have tenancy, I pay electrical bill, I've been here for 48 years"* E:A30. I then said: *"I went through all the rooms. There is no, no hidden guy"* E:A33. "Rooms" means any part of the dwelling: living-room, kitchen, garage, hallway, bathroom or bedroom I could walk or look through without forcing entry. No one was confined and every exit stayed available the entire time. Manzano later admitted it himself: *"Physically they did not try & stop me"* (01/07 22:04 D01AG698N). I never saw anyone in our group threaten or touch a squatter.

9) Since police were coming, I wanted weapons put away in the group's vehicles before officers arrived. That is what I usually do before law enforcement arrives at a scene, so we are not holding weapons or leaving weapons in plain view. Art had just said he needed to put his gun in the car E:A34. That is what I meant when I said: *"We all need to hide some shit"* E:A34. I used a bad choice of words. I meant put our weapons in the cars before police arrived. Art put it plainly: *"We're not hiding nothing from them. We got, we're on a lease"* E:A39. Manzano narrated it: *"No, they're not driving away. They're coming back into the house now without their weapons"* E:A40. I stayed, met the officers & asked for a civil standby. Art had the lease on his phone but had left it in his car at the Oceana Market / Eureka Square shopping center in Pacifica, where my earlier bodycam videos were recorded. His car had no working headlights & other problems, so he could not drive back. Art walked toward the property while texting me photos of the lease. San Bruno police arrived about 3:00 a.m. Officer Anthony McKenna was the investigating officer. At the scene he treated the matter as a civil dispute, did not tell me Angel had pointed a firearm & released me. I told McKenna that Art was coming back with the lease and asked him to wait for a civil standby. He declined because he did not want to wait for Art, but told me he would help with a civil standby if we called ahead. When a commanding officer wants to help, I value that connection. In my experience they often won't help, let alone get involved.

10) I did not know Angel. I did not know he was prohibited from possessing a firearm and had nothing to do with it. On my own bodycam I asked Art where his katana was because I expected Art to have a katana, not a pistol. The next time I spoke with McKenna, he told me squatters were claiming Angel had pointed a gun at them. I told McKenna I did not see Angel point a firearm at anyone, but if it was true it was possible he did it because of McAlister's gun threat, which McKenna denied hearing. He asked if I wanted to press charges against McAlister. I told him all I wanted was the civil standby, for him to review the video again & that I would help his investigation in any way I could. I then gave him Angel's and Van's phone numbers. After McKenna kept promising the civil standby, Art told me he drove from Cupertino to San Bruno more than a dozen times for the civil standby & slept in his car outside on several nights waiting.

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DECLARATION

11) I informed McKenna more than once (including text messages) that according to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, San Bruno PD polices their own city & that they have no jurisdiction to help with the civil standby regardless of McKenna's insistence otherwise. The civil standby never happened. On 01/19/26 Art went to the San Bruno station (01/19 21:44 D01AG698N) and again asked if the police would do the civil standby. McKenna said they would not get involved unless a formal eviction was completed first. McKenna arrested Art later that evening, at about 10:00 p.m. McKenna then asked me to come to the station to discuss the case. I said I would not meet unless the civil standby had happened. He insisted on meeting in person and asked to come to my home. I agreed instead to meet at a Walgreens in San Francisco at 11:00 p.m. that night, where I was arrested on arrival & questioned in custody. Stephen Martin Wagstaffe's complaint & media statements to KTVU & CBS do not match each other or the evidence. I released my bodycam footage to news publications to avoid defamation because news stations told me they intended to publish the DA's statement unless I gave them direct evidence of its inaccuracies. Below is a comparison list:

MEDIA

1. Not explicitly stated but implied through "armed invasion" framing
2. Claims McAlister is a victim
3. No mention
4. "Tell the occupants they had to get out" forced removal
5. "Eight men take a battering ram, break down a door, charge on in"
6. "He's the hirer. He's going to be held accountable"
7. Manzano's mother deceased
8. "scared the daylight out of them" & "sleeping family"
9. "This case can be an example... Such disputes belong in courtrooms"
10. "No training" & "don't ask, don't tell" arrangement with owner

COMPLAINT

1. Carried victims "into another country, state, county"
2. No mention
3. PC §12022(b)(1): counts 6, 8, 9
4. False Imprisonment: confinement
5. Burglary: entered with intent to commit theft / false imprisonment
6. No mention
7. No mention
8. No mention
9. No mention
10. No mention

EVIDENCE

1. DISMISSED at preliminary hearing & No physical touching
2. Selective victim narrative
3. I carried a katana, not a firearm
4. "Physically they did not try & stop me" & "15 minutes to pack up"
5. Battering ram only touched the gate, no doors forced
6. Neither Tran (who hired me) nor Van (who hired Angel) were charged
7. Magda M. is alive in Roseville
8. No one asleep & McAlister threatened "shot in the face"
9. Admits intent to make an example, not a fair prosecution
10. Had written contract with arranged licensed security

PEOPLE REFERENCE

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|---|--|
| 1. Jerry Tran: Owner's representative (Jae Holdings Inc.) | 6. Shawna Marie McAlister: Squatter who threatened us |
| 2. Arthur Gutierrez Jr.: Tenant / Subcontractor, freed me | 7. Patrick Calleja: Leader of the Squatter Organization |
| 3. Van Fredricks: Security company owner / Subcontractor | 8. Floyd Cooper: Squatter sitting on the laundry machine |
| 4. Angelmike Va Regalado "Angel": Van's Security Hire | 9. George Georgiou: Squatter in the downstairs room |
| 5. Silvino Angel Jr. Manzano: Squatter who was ordering Angel around & arguing with Art about Squatter rights | 10. Anthony McKenna: San Bruno Investigating Officer |
| | 11. Stephen M. Wagstaffe: San Mateo County Attorney |

12) My documented language processing disorder can affect my communication & comprehension. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true & correct.

Executed: S.F., California Date: 07/18/26 Signature: _____

JAMES JACOBS