

People v. Awbrey is the trial of Cameron Awbrey, a restaurant owner, who is being charged with human trafficking and false imprisonment of Lin Stark, an immigrant from the country of Tanterra.*

The prosecution alleges that Cameron targeted Lin to cook at Cameron's restaurant, Taste of Tanterra, with the intent to obtain forced labor by depriving Lin of Lin's personal liberty. Cameron lured Lin with false promises of good pay, free room and board, and the prospect of bringing Lin's family to the U.S. Once Lin began working, Cameron forced Lin to work long hours for little pay and to suffer poor living conditions. The prosecution further alleges that Lin was afraid to leave the building and on one occasion was physically locked in Lin's apartment with no way for Lin to leave. In addition to Lin's inability to leave the premises, Cameron was verbally abusive towards Lin and withheld Lin's visa and passport. A prosecution expert will testify to the signs of human trafficking and explain how Lin appears to show signs typical of human trafficking victims.

The defense argues that Cameron was a hardworking, novice business owner with a deep connection to Tanterra and its people. Cameron was a concerned employer who was making an effort to help Lin maintain Lin's work visa. Although Lin worked slowly, Cameron wanted to do whatever Cameron could to make sure Lin was able to stay in the U.S. legally. The defense will further argue Cameron did not deprive Lin of Lin's personal liberty, and that Lin had a key to the apartment and was free to leave at any time. Defense witnesses will testify that Cameron treated Lin like family and generously provided Lin with free room and board. A defense expert in human trafficking will testify that Lin does not exhibit the signs of a person who has been trafficked.

The pretrial issue involves the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, namely protection against illegal search and seizure and against self-incrimination. The evidence at issue concerns a potentially incriminating statement made by Cameron during an arrest by Officer Hayden West on an unrelated warrant that followed an illegal investigatory stop. The prosecution will argue that Cameron's statement should be included in the prosecution's evidence against Cameron for the human trafficking charge, since the connection between the illegal stop and Cameron's statement was attenuated. Defense will argue that the statement made by Cameron must be excluded because it is the fruit of the poisonous tree, not attenuated to the unlawful stop.

* Tanterra is a fictional country created for the purposes of the California Mock Trial.