

Kingdom of Aurelia v. Corin Vale

On June 12th, 2025, Princess Elowen of Aurelia attended the annual Lantern Festival at the Royal Conservatory. The event was open to the public and attended by hundreds of citizens and visitors.

At approximately 7:45 p.m., Princess Elowen was last seen walking near the eastern gardens. When she did not return for the closing ceremony, palace staff alerted royal security.

At 9:00 p.m., the Royal Palace received a message demanding a ransom of five million crowns in exchange for the Princess's safe return. The message stated that Princess Elowen was unharmed (exhibit 1)

The following morning, Princess Elowen was found safe inside a guesthouse located in Brackenfell Village, several miles from the palace. She had not been injured.

Later that day, Aurelia Royal Investigations arrested Corin Vale, a former palace intern who had recently been dismissed from his position. Investigators stated that Vale had knowledge of palace operations, he was found in possession of markers that appeared to have been used to create the ransom note and had been near the festival grounds that evening.

Corin Vale denies any involvement and maintains that he did not take the Princess. He asserts that the Kingdom's case is built on a shaky foundation, citing a lack of proper investigation and limited evidence. Rather, many other workers within the Kingdom would have had the same motive, and many had the opportunity to kidnap the Princess.

Vale now stands trial for kidnapping for ransom. He pleads Not Guilty.

Kingdom Witness: Captain Rowan Hale

Captain Rowan Hale has served as Head of Royal Security for twelve years and was responsible for overseeing safety at the Lantern Festival. He testifies that Princess Elowen was last seen near the eastern gardens at approximately 7:45 p.m., an area that had limited security coverage due to staffing shortages. Hale states that Corin Vale, a recently dismissed palace intern, was familiar with security routes and blind spots, and that this knowledge would have made it easier for him to remove the Princess without being detected.

Hale admits under questioning that no physical evidence directly places Vale with the Princess that evening. He also acknowledges that multiple staff members and contractors had access to the same security layouts. Additionally, Hale approved the reduced security staffing that night, creating a potential bias to shift blame away from internal security failures and onto a former employee.

Kingdom Witness: Lyra Mendel

Investigator Lyra Mendel led the investigation into Princess Elowen's disappearance. She testifies that Corin Vale was arrested because he had recently been dismissed from his internship and could have been motivated by resentment or financial desperation. Mendel also notes that Vale was seen near the festival grounds earlier that evening and had knowledge of palace operations, making him a logical suspect when the ransom demand was received.

On cross-examination, Mendel concedes that no fingerprints, eyewitnesses, or surveillance footage connect Vale to the ransom message or the guesthouse in Brackenfell Village. She also admits that other individuals with palace access were not thoroughly investigated once Vale became the primary suspect, raising questions about confirmation bias and the completeness of the investigation.

Defense Witness: Maribel Thorne

Maribel Thorne coordinated logistics for the Lantern Festival and testifies that hundreds of guests, vendors, and temporary workers had access to the festival grounds, including the eastern gardens. She explains that security credentials were loosely monitored due to the event's public nature and that multiple palace employees had similar knowledge of schedules and security routines as Corin Vale.

Thorne admits that she did not personally track staff movements that evening and relied on volunteer reports that were submitted days later. The prosecution may highlight her lack of precise oversight and suggest that she is minimizing security issues to protect her professional reputation.

Defense Witness: Tomas Reed

Tomas Reed owns the guesthouse in Brackenfell Village where Princess Elowen was found. He testifies that the Princess arrived late at night accompanied by a hooded individual he could not clearly identify. Reed states that the person paid in cash, avoided conversation, and left before dawn. Reed emphasizes that the individual did not resemble Corin Vale based on height and voice.

However, Reed acknowledges that it was dark, he was tired, and he never saw the person's face clearly. He also admits he did not report the guest immediately, only coming forward after the Princess was found, giving the prosecution an opportunity to question the reliability and timing of his memory.

Exhibit 1

I have kidnapped
the Princess. I
demand five
million dollars
deposited into my
bank account, or
else.

Exhibit 2

