

**CRIME:** Violent attacks prompt police to issue warning

# Thief sought in sex attacks

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STAFF WRITER

A third attack by a violent sexual predator along the Steeles Avenue corridor has police issuing a warning to women.

According to Toronto Police, shortly after midnight Tuesday a woman entering her home in the Bayview and Steeles avenues area of North York was attacked from behind and forced into a nearby van. She was driven to the rear of a school a short distance away and sexually assaulted.

Police have linked the attack to two others that occurred late last year in the same area, York Region Det. Brett Henderson said.

Sgt. John Sheldon said the assailant is also an auto thief, who specifically steals Chrysler vans.

"He's had a vehicle, somebody's seen him with that vehicle, if we can get that we've got a damn good lead," Sheldon said.

Henderson said if the man doesn't live in the area now, he probably has lived or worked there. When people go shopping, they shop close to home, he said.

"When this guy goes 'shopping', he's shopping in areas he's familiar with," he said.

While there are some differences

between Tuesday's attack and the previous ones, Henderson said investigators still think they're dealing with the same suspect.

The suspect is described as a black male with a medium complexion, 20 to 25 years, five feet seven inches tall, approximately 120 pounds with a thin build. He has a long face, is clean shaven and speaks without a noticeable accent.

Henderson said the assailant is also known to possess a gold necklace with a medallion in the shape of a gold ring bearing the head of an eagle with outstretched wings.

Call police at 1-888-846-2291 if you have information about this crime.

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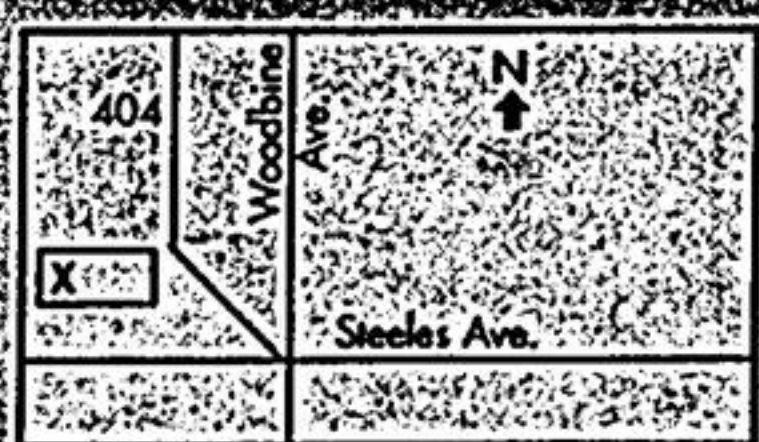
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