

POLICE: Suspects evade capture following 100-kilometre chase from Stouffville to Toronto

Trailer thieves ambushed by employee

York Regional Police are searching for a pair of thieves after a cargo trailer stolen from a King business was abandoned on the Queen Elizabeth Way in Etobicoke after a 100-kilometre chase early Tuesday.

The pair even managed to elude Air 1's York's new eye in the sky helicopter, Sgt. John Sheldon said.

Shortly after midnight, a 52-year-old employee staying at King City Trailers on King Road investigated a noise and found two men in the process of stealing an empty cargo trailer.

Sheldon said police investigators believe the pickup truck the thieves used to drive to the site was stolen.

The employee jumped on the hitch tongue as the truck and trailer were driving away. The thieves began swerving to try and dislodge him. He was thrown off, receiving bruises and lacerations to the back of his head before the trailer ran over his foot.

Sheldon said the employee then called police.

Close to half an hour later, a police cruiser at Warden Avenue and Stouffville Road spotted the stolen trailer and began chasing it.

Sheldon said the driver of the truck and trailer ignored the cruiser, made his way to Hwy. 404 and started heading south. At Hwy. 401 he went west to Allen Road before heading south to Yorkdale mall.

At this point, the cruisers following the truck were pulled back and the helicopter was called in, Sheldon said.

From Yorkdale, the stolen truck and trailer went up Dufferin Street and back on to Hwy. 401. The helicopter followed the truck as it went along Hwy. 401 to Hwy. 407 and doubled back east to Hwy. 427 before heading south to the QEW.

Shortly after getting on to the QEW, the thieves abandoned the truck in the left-hand lane, Sheldon said.

The truck bandits escaped after crossing the highway and jumping a fence.

"They sure risked their lives to be involved in the theft of a trailer," Sheldon said. "Within half an hour, a CN (Rail) pickup truck was stolen from a (nearby) Comfort Inn."

Anyone who may have any information about the incident is asked to call York Regional Police at 881-1221 or Crime Stoppers at (416) 222-TIPS.

Purse snatched in afternoon

A 72-year-old woman was attacked and robbed in her garage Tuesday afternoon.

Police said suspects likely followed her home from the Royal Bank on Woodbine Avenue where she made a large withdrawal about 2:30 p.m.

As she left the bank, she noticed a red, four-door, older-model vehicle parked nearby with a man sitting inside.

She drove to her Leighton Crescent home, entered the garage and was about to unload groceries from her trunk when a man approached her and grabbed her purse, police said.

The woman tried to keep hold of the bag, but was thrown to the ground by the suspect.

He then fled into a waiting vehicle, apparently the same one she had noticed earlier at the plaza.

She suffered a cut ankle and bruised arms and elbows.

The robber made off with \$1,400. It's the second time in a week a Markham woman has had her purse snatched in front of her own home. Last Wednesday a 36-year-old woman was robbed at 2:20 a.m. on her Pettigrew Court front doorstep.

The suspect struggled with her for the purse, grabbed it and fled into a waiting car — described as a dark-coloured older model with four doors.

The suspect in Tuesday's attack is described as black, male, five-foot-four-inches tall, 125 pounds with shaved hair in the back and parted on the side. He was wearing a white T-shirt and blue pants.

The suspect in the Pettigrew Court robbery is black, male, about five-foot-ten-inches tall, wearing dark pants and a beige jacket.

"The descriptions aren't clear

enough to say they are linked, but we are investigating both," Sheldon said. "Describing someone after being the victim of an attack is sometimes easier said than done."

People should call police if they see anything suspicious, including vehicles on their street that don't seem to belong.

"Use your rearview mirror to make sure you're not being followed. If you feel uneasy or something doesn't feel right, sometimes natural instincts kick in. Don't pull into that driveway, drive to a police station or use your cell phone to call police. We will do a follow up."

Marijuana crop uncovered

More than 300 marijuana plants worth more than \$200,000 on the street were seized by officers working a joint-forces operation Wednesday afternoon.

The Biker Task Force, which includes officers from York Regional Police, the RCMP and the South Simcoe Police, discovered 330 plants in two northern locations.

Plants found in fields at Hwy. 48 and Mount Albert Road in East Gwillimbury and at Baldwin and McCowan roads in Georgina will be destroyed.



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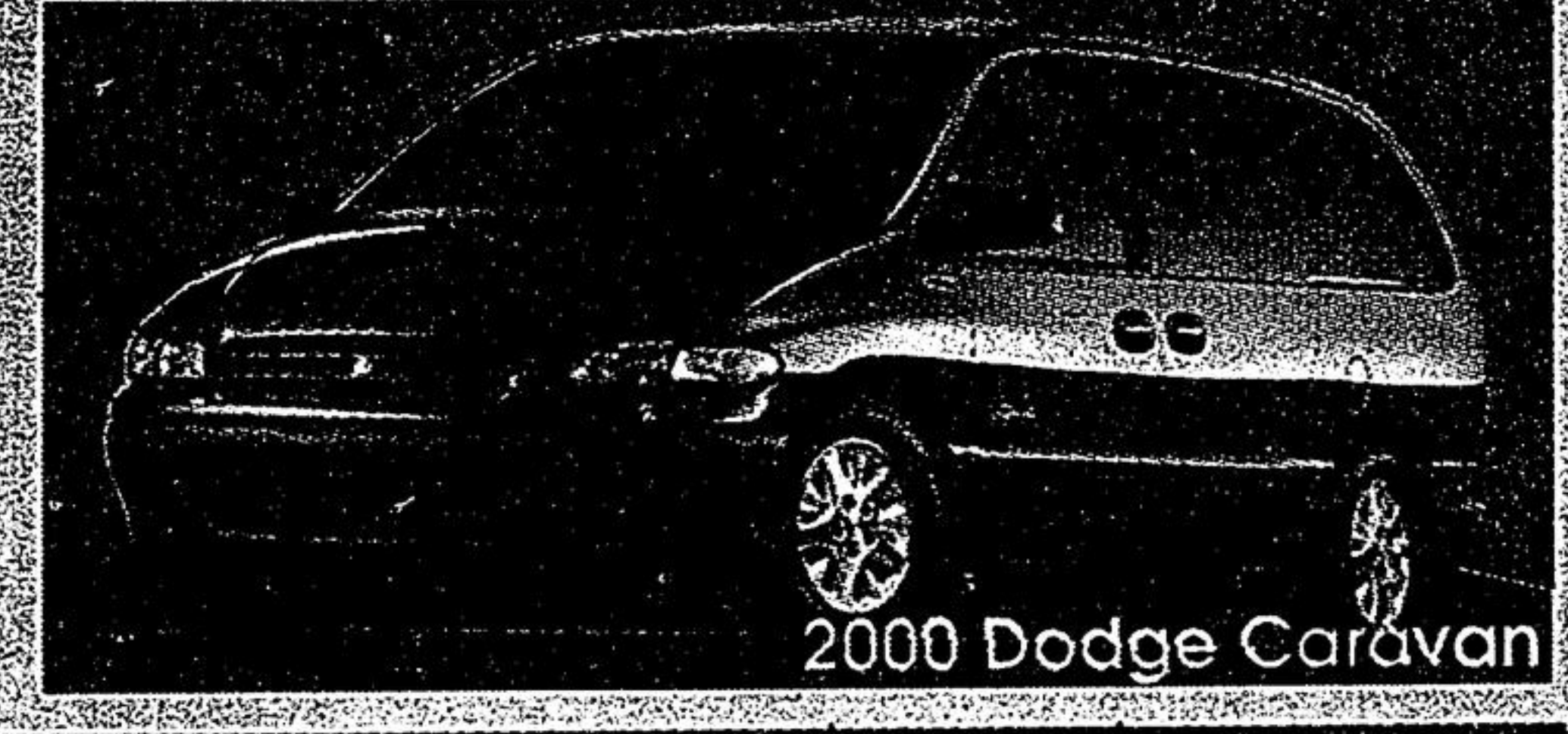
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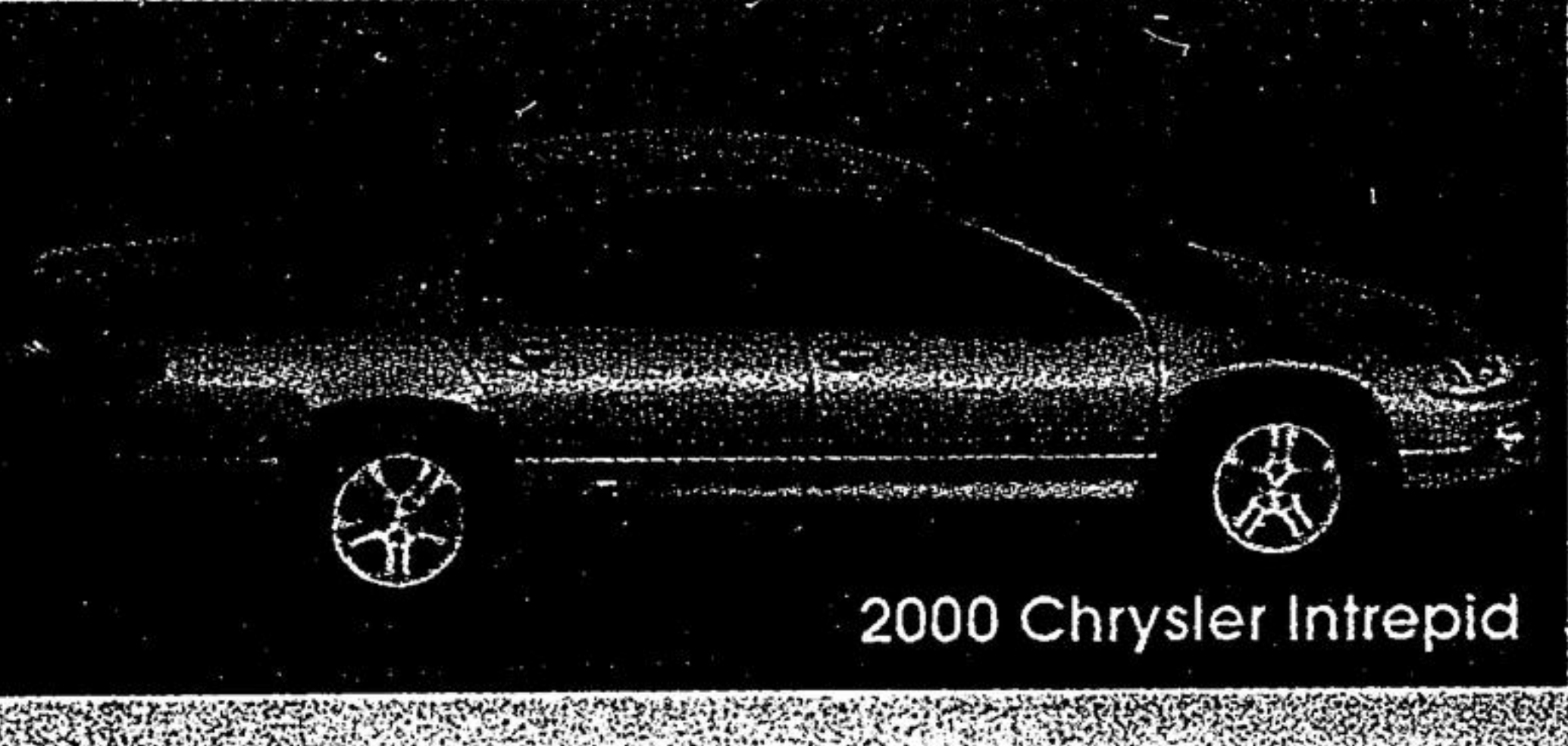
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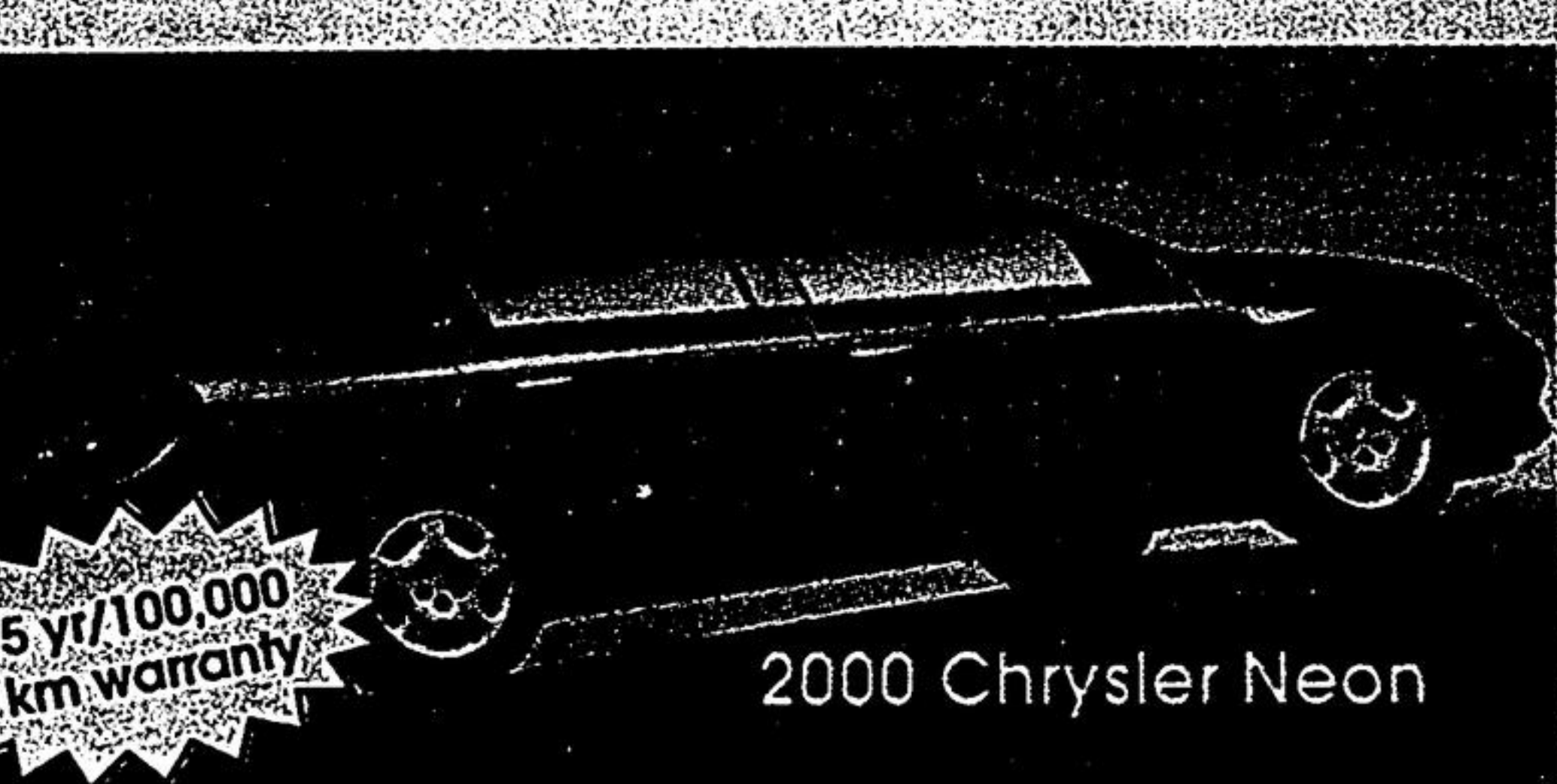
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