



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire

NATIONWIDE 1-800-424-9393
DC METRO AREA (202) 366-0123
INTERNET: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 241

Date Received

20-JUN-2001

Od_or _____
rt_dt _____
pd_rt _____
rp_lr _____

Reference No.

890787

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☐ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner _____ Date ____/____/____

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (Locate at bottom of windshield or driver's side door)	Vehicle Make	Vehicle Model	Vehicle Year	Current Odometer Reading
1GMDX06E7VD131468	PONTIAC TRUCK	TRANSPORT	1997	

Purchase Date	Dealer's Name _____	Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
☐ New ☒ Used	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____	No Cylinders _____	

Transmission Type	Antilock Brakes	Restraint System	Cruise Control	Drive Train	Vehicle Type	Body Style
☐ Manual ☐ Automatic	☒ Yes ☐ No	☒ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbelt ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Bel ☐ Passengerside Airbag	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	☐ Car ☐ Sport Util ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other _____	☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☒ Other _____

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 01400000	Part Name(s) STEERING:GEAR:RACK AND PINION	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
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No of Failure	Date(s) of Failure(s) _____ Mileage at Failure(s) _____	Failed Part(s) ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously ☐ Yes ☐ No
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APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured	Number of Fatalities	Estimated Property Damag	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

STEERING WHEEL WOULD LOCK UP WHEN MAKING A LEFT TURN. VEHICLE TAKEN TO DEALER FOR INSPECTION, AND INFORMED THAT RACK AND PINION STEERING WAS BROKEN ,AND NEEDED REPLACEMENT. PROVIDE ANY FURTHER DETAILS ON THIS MATTER. *AK

COPIES OF THIS FORM ARE:

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

John R. Bassett

1997 Pontiac Trans Sport Gear-Rack and Pinion Failure

14 June 2001

ADD to 890 787

My wife was parked on the side of the street. She turned the steering wheel left to pull onto the street. The steering wheel locked in place and she was unable to turn it back to the right. With the steering wheel locked in place the vehicle veered to the right into a neighbor's yard. After she came to a stop she waited about 30 seconds and the steering wheel released. She proceeded to slowly drive the van around the block. Each time she turned to the left the steering wheel locked in place. When she was driving around the block each time the steering wheel locked in place it would release after waiting five to ten seconds. My wife parked the van and called me.

I started the van, with it in park I could turn the steering wheel right and everything seemed ok. When I turned the steering wheel left it locked in place. The power steering pump would make noise as if it had been placed under a load. I pulled the steering wheel hard to the left and heard a pop. At this time the steering wheel unlocked and I was able to turn it freely left or right. I pulled away from the side of the road and began to drive to the dealership. Every time I turned left the steering wheel would lock in place. After waiting five to ten seconds it would release.

When I returned to the place the van had been parked I searched for any pieces that might have been lying on the ground. I found a cap (cover), fluid and what appears to be a disassembled ball bearing. (These parts are included in a plastic bag in the box with the gear-rack and pinion I am sending to the NHTSA.)

Chad Kelso, Service Advisor, of Bassett Pontiac telephoned me about 4:20 PM to let me know what they had discovered was wrong with the van. He stated that a nut had broken on the bottom of the rack and pinion system causing the system to fall apart. Then the air bag coil was twisted which is also causing a bind up in the steering wheel. I asked to speak with someone due to the fact that I was not happy with the operation of the vehicle since I had purchased it and that I believed this rack and pinion failure was due to a manufacturing defect. I was directed to the Service Manager, Kelli Martin. Mr. Martin explained to me that when the vehicle was turned hard to the left the nut was broken. (The hard turn to the left was done after the steering wheel had locked up by me, not my wife.) He then informed me that due to a design change I would also have to replace the tie rod ends. I was quoted \$1440, parts and labor, and told the parts alone would amount to almost \$1200. Addressing my concern over the performance and problems experienced with the van Mr. Martin stated there was nothing at all he could do for me and directed me to call Pontiac's Customer Assistance Center. (800-762-2737)

I telephoned the Pontiac Customer Assistance Center (CAC) and spoke with Larry Larson. Mr. Larson took my complaint down and told me he would have to contact Bassett Pontiac to verify the information. I waited on hold for several minutes until Mr. Larson notified me that he could not get a hold of the Service Manager at Bassett. Mr. Larson said he would try again later and then contact me on 6/15/01. When addressing my concern that the rack and pinion failure was due to a manufacturing defect Mr. Larson stated that "tires come off of vehicles for no apparent reason, these things can just happen". He also replied that there were no safety backups to help avoid a crash when this type of steering failure occurred.

1997 Pontiac Trans Sport Gear-Rack and Pinion Failure

15 June 2001

At 4:00 PM I had Mr. Larson had not contacted me so I telephone the Pontiac CAC. The gentlemen I spoke with said he would let Mr. Larson know I had called. At 4:45 PM Mr. Larson left me a voice mail stating that Bassett Pontiac was compiling some information and that he would contact me on Monday, 6/18/01.

I then contacted Mr. Martin at Bassett to let him know that I was waiting on a response from Pontiac before I made a decision on what to do with my van. Mr. Martin stated that he thought Pontiac was going to offer me some trade in assistance but that I would still have to pay to have the van repaired.

18 June 2001

I contacted Bassett to notify them of the parts I had discovered on the ground where my van had been parked the day of the problem. All service personnel were at lunch so I left a message concerning the parts. (It was after Bassett's Service Shop had closed for the evening when I discovered the parts. I just realized today that I had never informed them of my discovery.)

20 June 2001

Mr. Larson of Pontiac never contacted me. I telephoned the Pontiac CAC once again to find out the status of their response to my complaint. I spoke with Yaheo Velazquez. Mr. Velazquez notified me that no assistance what so ever would be offered. I asked that a complaint be filed against Mr. Larson for failing to keep me informed as promised. I let Mr. Velazquez know that I would take all possible steps to let other individuals know of this problem I believed to be a manufacturing defect.

I telephoned Bassett Pontiac and authorized them to repair the van.

22 June 2001

Chad Kelso of Bassett contacted me to let me know the repairs to my van had been completed. I requested that the old parts be placed in the van so I could take them with me. I was informed that the rack and pinion had been sent to GM on 6/21/01. I asked that my rack and pinion be retrieved so that I may have it.

23 June 2001

Retrieved my van and paid for repairs made to it.

1997 Pontiac Trans Sport Gear-Rack and Pinion Failure

26 June 2001

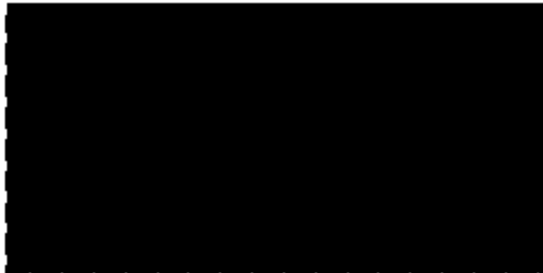
John Ridgley, Investigator for the NHTSA contacted me. Mr. Ridgley requested that I send the failed rack and pinion to him for examination. (202-493-0209)

27 June 2001

Retrieved, and paid for, the rack and pinion removed from my van.

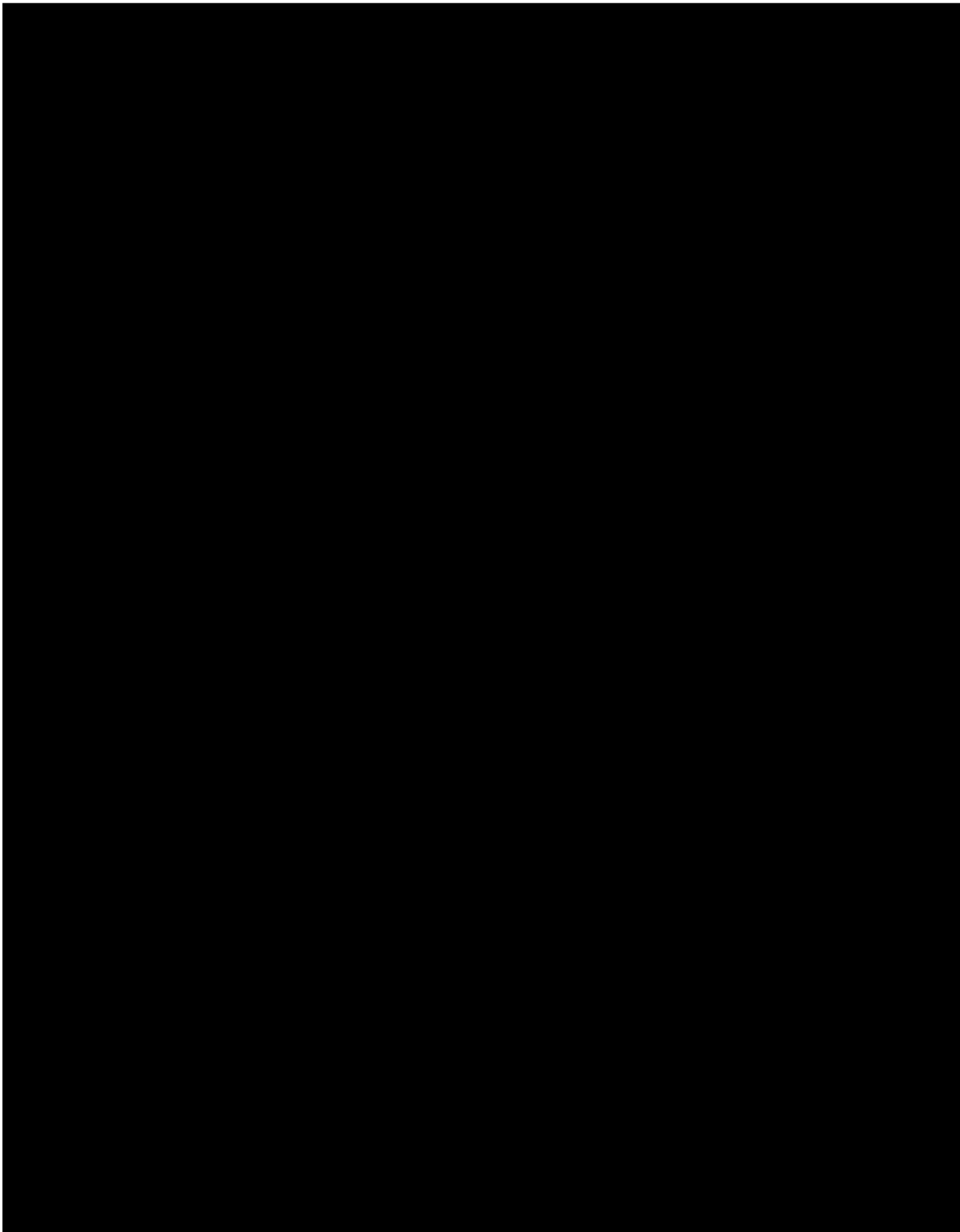
11 July 2001

I sent the failed rack and pinion to the NHTSA, attention John Ridgley.



THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE WITHHELD TO
PROTECT UNWARRANTED INVASION OF
PERSONAL PRIVACY PURSUANT TO
EXEMPTION 6 OF THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT, 5 U.S.C. §52(b)(6)

(Page 1 through Page 5)



 DOT Auto Safety Hotline Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT 1-888-327-4236 www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline		FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 241	
		Date Received: <u>20-JUN-2001</u> Office: <u>OFFICE</u> REFLECTS INVESTIGATION: <u>YES</u>	
OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print) 598092		Reference No. 890787	
Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.		☒ YES ☐ NO	
Signature of Owner:		Date: <u>7/10/01</u>	
VEHICLE INFORMATION			
Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side) 1GMDX06E7VD131468	Vehicle Make PONTIAC TRUCK	Vehicle Model TRANS SPORT	Vehicle Year 1997
		Current Odometer Reading 69228	
Purchase Date <u>2/12/00</u> ☐ New ☒ Used	Dealer's Name: <u>Bassett Pontiac - GMC</u> City: <u>Muncie</u> State: <u>IN</u> Zip Code: <u>47303</u>		Engine Size (CID/CC/L): <u>3.4 L</u> ☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☒ Gas No Cylinders: _____ ☒ Fuel Injection
Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☒ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☒ Yes ☐ No	Restraint System ☒ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbelt ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Belt ☐ Passengerside Airbag	Cruise Control ☐ Yes ☒ No
		Drive Train ☒ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	Vehicle Type ☐ Car ☐ Sport Ut ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☒ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other: _____
		Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☒ Other: _____	
FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION			
Component D1400000	Part Name(s) STEERING:GEAR:RACK AND PINION	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☒ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☒ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures <u>2 different parts</u>	Date(s) of Failure(s): <u>14-JUN-2001</u> Mileage at Failure(s): <u>69228</u> Vehicle Speed at Failure(s): <u>5-10 MPH</u>		Failed Part(s) Available? ☒ Yes ☐ No
NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☒ No			
APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION			
(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and injury(ies) on the back of this form)			
Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured <u>0</u>	Number of Fatalities <u>0</u>
		Estimated Property Damage <u>0</u>	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)			
STEERING WHEEL WOULD LOCK UP WHEN MAKING A LEFT TURN. VEHICLE TAKEN TO DEALER FOR INSPECTION, AND INFORMED THAT RACK AND PINION STEERING WAS BROKEN, AND NEEDED REPLACEMENT. PROVIDE ANY FURTHER DETAILS ON THIS MATTER. *AK <i>Please see attached sheet for further information</i>			
CONTINUE ON BACK IF NEEDED			
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(Page 1 through Page 6)

1997 Pontiac Trans Sport Gear-Rack and Pinion Failure

14 June 2001

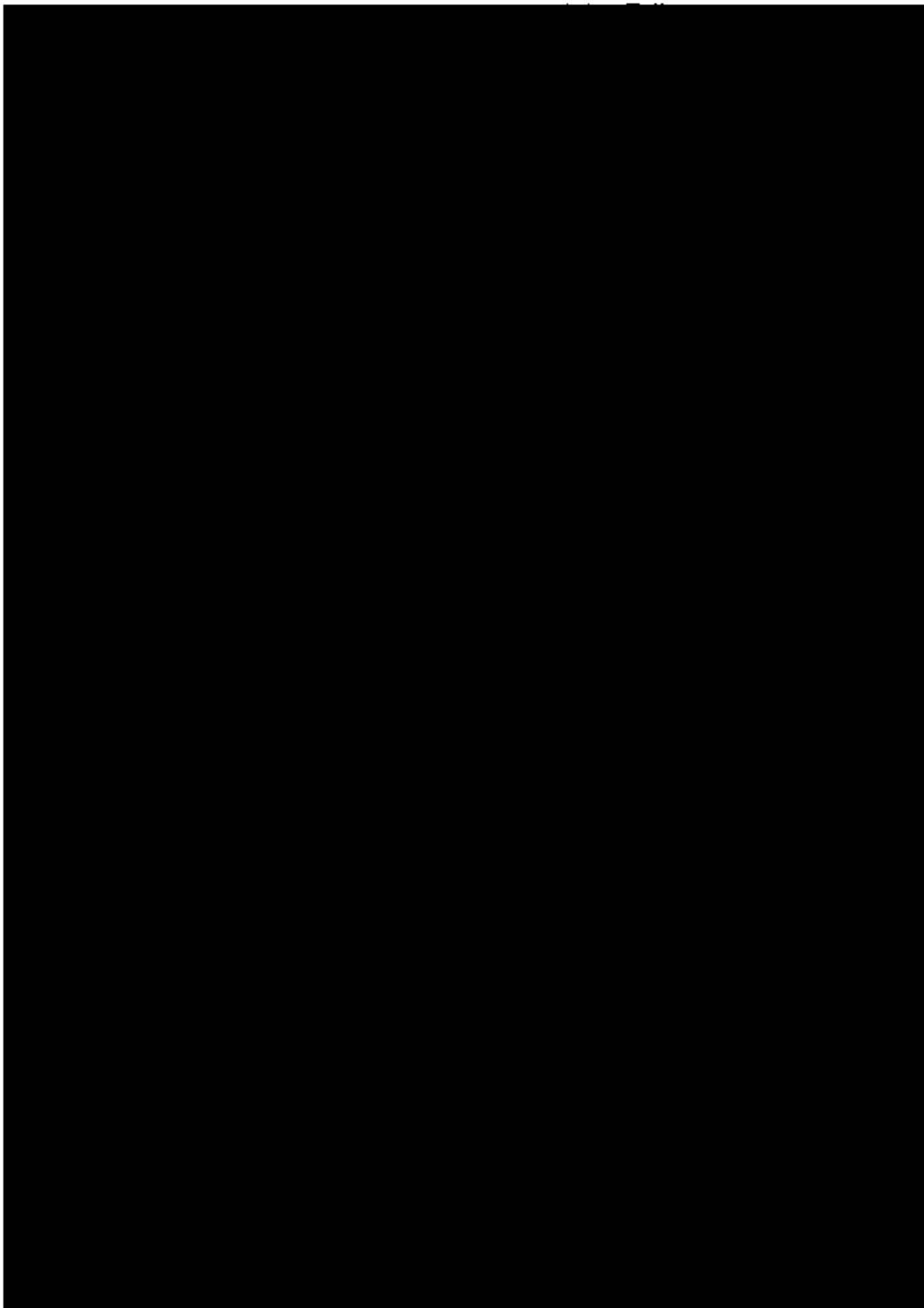
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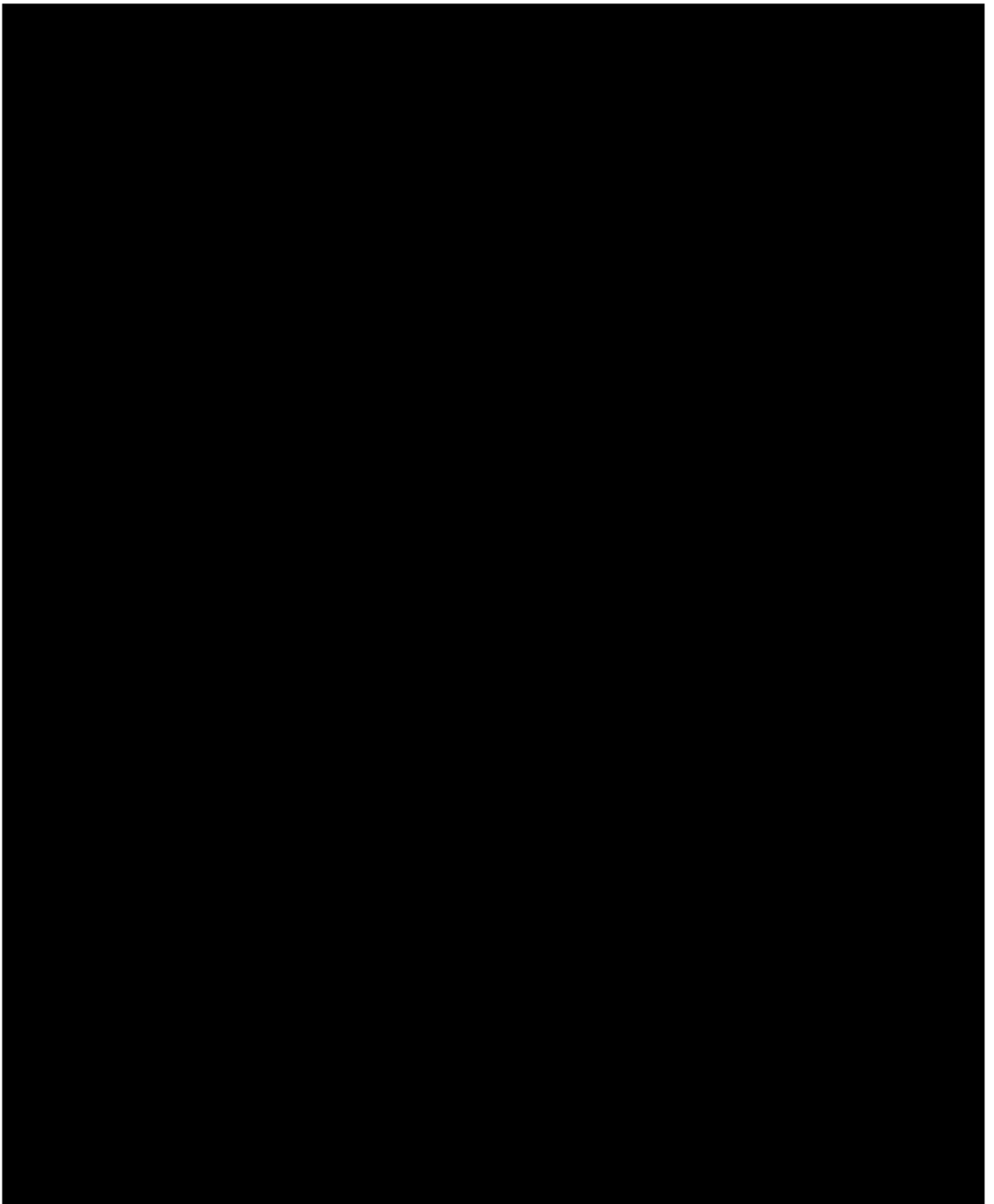
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