In Sickness and In Health

Two HIVers swap vows and celebrate their nuptials inside a nursing home

October 1, 2005 By Emmy Favilla

Their docs and nurses prescribed something old, something new,something borrowed and something blue. And on July 8, HIVers Isaiah Gaines and Lorena Miner, both 43, wed inside Unity Health and Rehab, a Miami nursing center they had entered two months earlier. *POZ* crashed the wedding.

How did you two meet?
Isaiah: “God put us together—we met at a church during a presentation I was part of in 2002. I saw this girl watching me from the audience and thought, ‘I’ve got a stalker!’”
Lorena: “I just wanted to get laid! Oh, I liked him.”

Who disclosed first?
Isaiah: “At the church presentation, I told everyone that I was positive and available to talk afterward.”

How did you propose?
Isaiah: “We’ve wanted to get married for a long time. I’ve been sick lately,and something just felt right—so I asked her. She picked the month of July, and I picked the 10th because I found dimes everywhere—but we married on the eighth.”
Lorena: “We didn’t marry sooner because I went back to prison for 18 months for a parole violation.”

How has your husband helped you?
Lorena: “I’d been on the streets since I was 13—I was a prostitute and recovering addict. I thought sex meant love. It took me a while to get past that, but Isaiah helped me.”

What did your friends say about your relationship?
Isaiah:“I felt funny taking Lorena to my neighborhood. I’ve messed with white girls before. My friends call her ‘gray girl’ because they don’t see her as black or white.”

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