Sale of a Lifetime

To get meds for his man, an HIVer goes from full house to no house

December 1, 2003 By Josh Sparber

Who: Michael Carbone
What: His yard sale
Where: Tampa, Florida
When: 09.27.03

Michael Carbone, 40, couldn't afford meds for bed-bound beau Louie Russell, his partner of six and a half years. So Carbone began to liquidate a lifetime of assets: everything from his mother's crocheting chair to the house he lived in. As the bargaining began, POZ *peered on.*

We had a yard sale to start getting rid of everything that we don't need. Unfortunately, Louie was having a really bad day and was unable to help out. He got sick with a staph infection in April, and I didn't want to sell the house, but either we keep our house and he goes untreated, or we sell everything to get meds for him.

Between his disability and our assets, Louie doesn't qualify for Medicaid. His private insurance disqualifies him from ADAP, and with a 10 percent co-pay for high-priced meds, there's just no way we can afford them. Putting everything up for sale was heartbreaking, but at the same time, a little relieving—this is the official beginning of helping to take care of Louie.

Once the house is sold, we're going to live out of an RV and travel around the country. We definitely want to head out west—I'm very spiritual, so I'd like to go to Sedona, Arizona. The freedom, serenity and peacefulness of the desert—it's an area that Louie would like to visit. And whether the meds help or not, I want him to be able to go out there, even if it's the last thing that he sees. Then I'll feel content. Louie told me that no matter what happens to him, I should never feel guilty because I've been the one to make him the happiest in his whole life. But for now, we're just living everything day by day.

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