

FIELD NOTE 0000006

September 8, 2026

Field Notes from the Mabuhay Stories Experiment Beyond the Story Score.

BEING FROM THE HEART OF THE HEART OF THE MODERN INNOVATION HEARTLAND MATTERS

EVEN NOW

KADAYAWAN VALLEY ORIGIN STORY 0

I, Grant, was born and raised in the **heart of the heart of the modern innovation heartland**.

And, no matter how old I become, that legacy travels with me even now.

I didn't know that's what was happening at the time, of course.

Children rarely understand the historical significance of their neighborhoods.

They're simply home.

You ride your bicycle.

You go to school.

You play.

You take things apart.

Perhaps you put some of them back together.

You wonder how things work.

And you absorb assumptions about what human beings can make without realizing you're absorbing them.

Only much later do you look backward and recognize the landscape that helped teach you how to look forward.

Thomas Edison was just down the road.

About twenty-one — by car.

And Edison's particular habit of hovering around the threshold of sleep with pieces of metal ready to clatter him awake now seems especially amusing to me.

Because these days I've found myself rediscovering something considerably older than Edison:

Sleep.

Wake.

Work.

Sleep again.

Perhaps dream.

Wake again.

Work again.

No sheet metal required.

Natural clatter beats metallic claptrap every time.

But Old Tom had his moments.

And one of those moments was recognizing that thresholds matter.

Something interesting sometimes happens between one state and another.

Between sleeping and waking.

Between imagining and making.

Between a problem and its solution.

Between something that doesn't exist yet and the first person sufficiently unreasonable to begin building it.

I've spent much of my life around those thresholds.

For many years, I programmed computers to do useful things.

Then came networks.

Systems.

Communities of users.

The Internet.

Artificial intelligence.

And eventually I began discovering that the most interesting systems I might help build weren't necessarily made from machines at all.

They were made from people.

Not **programmed** people.

People are wonderfully unsuitable for that.

People who encounter one another.

People who bring different gifts.

People who disagree.

People who wobble.

People who improvise.

People who occasionally discover something together that none of them carried into the room completely formed.

And somewhere along that road, the engineering problem changed.

The question was no longer merely:

Can we make this machine do something useful for people?

It became:

Can we make places where people can do something useful for one another?

And eventually:

Can we build communities in which those encounters naturally, organically, and increasingly Help Mercy Abound?

That's one of the questions from which the Kadayawan Valley grew.

Not from a single revelation.

Not from a master plan.

And certainly not from a straight line.

More like an accumulation.

Machines.

Software.

Networks.

Architecture.

Stories.

Songs.

Food.

Swimming pools.

Butterscotch.

Children with crayons.

Old people reading aloud.

Filipino families singing and dancing with me as my own.

Friends in Las Vegas.

Friends in Kimamon.

And people we haven't met yet bringing gifts we don't yet know we need.

Looking backward, I can see something I couldn't possibly have seen while growing up:

The Kadayawan Valley began long before I knew its name.

Perhaps it began whenever a little boy in the innovation heartland first learned that the world contained things that hadn't been invented yet.

Perhaps it continued whenever somebody showed him that problems could be examined rather than merely endured.

Perhaps every machine, program, system, story, friendship, failure, strange detour, and unexpected encounter since then has added another component.

And perhaps that's why I'm still building.

The materials have simply changed.

Machines → Software → Networks → AI → Stories → Communities.

But underneath all of them, the question has remained surprisingly stable:

Can we make this thing do something useful for people?

These days, increasingly, the "thing" isn't a thing.

It's an encounter.

And the engineer's job isn't always to engineer it.

Sometimes it's simply to make enough room for it to happen.

Then behold what people build together.

That's where Grace gets interesting.

That's where Mercy gets useful.

And perhaps that's the basic nature of the places from which Lasting Peace can grow.

Right on the streets where we live.

So yes.

I was born and raised in the heart of the heart of the modern innovation heartland.

And I'm still carrying a little of it with me, whoever I may go.

All the way toward the Kadayawan Valley.

And whatever we build there next there.

4EVER!

