

FIELD NOTE 0000011
September 11, 2026

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

PERHAPS WE'RE ALL A LITTLE LONELY

AND PERHAPS THAT'S WHY WE KEEP OFFERING ONE ANOTHER STORIES

The dedications of *The Mabuhay Stories*™ are all written, in one way or another, to all the lovely people in the world.

There's a reason for that.

I count myself as one of the lonely ones.

And so, in some ways, these Stories are therapy for me.

I think they're helping.

Not because they've solved loneliness.

They haven't.

Not because writing a Story completes something that was previously incomplete.

I'm becoming increasingly suspicious of completion as the measure of much of anything that matters.

They're helping because the writing keeps creating encounters.

And the encounters keep making room.

As I've invited more people to read these Stories, I've been greeted with nodding heads and shaking hands.

Not everybody likes every Story.

Not everybody sees what I see.

Thanks be to Elohim.

That would be a terribly small experiment.

But I think people recognize something in this idea that **the encounter matters more than the completion or the perfect performance.**

Perhaps that recognition comes easily because encounter is something already built deeply into us.

Before we know how to explain relationship, we reach for it.

Before we understand the grammar, we ask to be held.

One of my daughters, Cait, when she was very young, used to say:

“Hold you.”

What she meant was:

Please pick me up and hold me.

Her grammar hadn’t yet sorted out who was doing the holding and who was being held.

But the encounter was perfectly clear.

Hold you.

Mamma.

Cait.

Perhaps there’s something wonderfully primal about that.

We spend much of adult life assigning roles.

Giver.

Receiver.

Offerer.

Storyteller.

Listener.

Teacher.

Student.

Helper.

Helped.

And those distinctions can be useful.

But then an actual encounter happens and the lines begin crossing again.

The person who offers something receives something in the offering.

The person receiving gives something through the receiving.

The storyteller hears the Story differently because somebody else is listening.

The listener changes the telling merely by being there.

The creature holding another creature is also touched by the holding.

So who's the giver?

Who's the receiver?

Who's the offerer?

Sometimes I'm not sure it matters nearly as much as we think it does.

The encounter does.

That's what's on offer here.

PERHAPS STORIES ARE PLACES WHERE WE CAN BE A LITTLE LESS LONELY

I've been encouraged while writing these Stories that thoughts like these can still come out of me.

Some of the pathways I've been treading lately have been difficult ones.

And yet here are Stories.

Songs.

Characters.

Crayons.

Butterscotch.

Questions.

Friends I've known for years.

Friends I've only recently met.

Friends I haven't met yet.

Something keeps falling out of the jar.

Something keeps opening another door.

Something keeps making another little place where somebody might arrive.

Perhaps you.

And perhaps the reason you've picked up one of these Stories and decided to read it to somebody else is that you'd like to be a little less lonely too.

If that's the case—

Mabuhay, my friend.

Welcome.

Not because you've completed anything.

Not because you've mastered the Story.

Not because you've interpreted it correctly.

Not because your read-aloud voice is particularly impressive.

Not because you stayed inside the lines.

And certainly not because you've somehow become a Certified Professional Story Steward.

Humph.

Welcome because you arrived.

THE COMMUNITY BEGINS WITH SOMEBODY ARRIVING

Welcome to the community.

Welcome to the Guild of the Mabuhay Storytellers.

Welcome to the friendship of the Story Stewards.

Bring your voice.

Bring your questions.

Bring your crayons.

Bring the Stories you received before you ever found ours.

Bring the parts of yourself that are certain.

And perhaps leave a little room for the parts that aren't.

Then offer something.

A Story.

A chair.

A meal.

A song.

A listening ear.

A hand.

An apology.

A laugh.

A little time.

Perhaps simply your presence.

And behold what comes back.

Because giving and receiving may not be opposite directions after all.

They may simply be different movements within the same encounter.

And perhaps community begins whenever two creatures leave enough room between them for that movement to happen.

SO READ THE STORY

Read it badly if necessary.

Lose your place.

Let the child interrupt.

Let the elder remember something.

Let somebody color the horse green.

Let somebody disagree with you.

Let somebody tell you the Story reminded them of something you never intended.

Listen.

Receive.

Give something back.

And then let the Story travel again.

Because perhaps the purpose of a Story Steward isn't to produce a perfect performance.

Perhaps it's to help create the conditions in which another meaningful encounter can happen.

And then another.

And another.

Until some creature who was a little lonely before the Story began discovers that there are other creatures sitting nearby.

And perhaps the Story Steward discovers the same thing.

Hold you.

Maybe the grammar was never quite as wrong as it sounded.

May you live long.

May you prosper.

And may you help create many meaningful encounters that truly move the needle for the creatures to whom you offer them—and for the receiving giver you may discover yourself becoming along the way.

Mabuhay.

Welcome to the Story.

Welcome to the table.

Welcome to one another.

And together—

May we all—

Help Mercy Abound.

Right on the streets where we live.

Because we are, truly, just a bit less lonely than we were not too long before.

As we make our way, as best we can, toward...

4EVER!

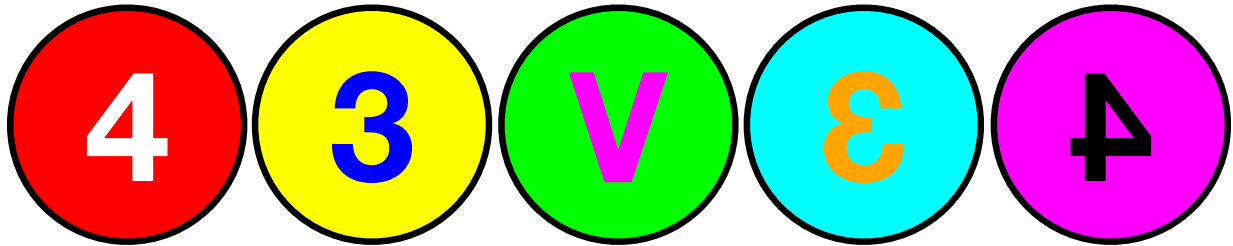


And for those of you who are tracking the progress of **4EVER!** as a fabulous interfaith prayer brunch... we have a glimmering new url that we hope you will all like.

43V34.com.

And it supports a pretty neat sign for when we need a marquee on the strip... or wherever Grace plunks us down.

We hope you'll appreciate this little sign from our timeline as well.



THE PRAYER OF
The Fabulous
Holy Queen of Grace
Eat. Pray. Sing. Dance. Love.

