Humour Trumps Public Angst - *A Reflection on Resilience in the Age of Breaking News*

I confess—my attention span is shrinking as the time between global crises contracts. Gone are the days when news media would remark on a moment of calm, with headlines that didn’t begin with “Breaking News.”

I’ve just returned from a much-needed break—a whirlwind tour visiting various locations across the U.S. and Canada. The time spent with friends and brief encounters with strangers offered a glimpse into how people are coping with relentless global turmoil, personal trials, and the now-inevitable flight delays.

Speaking of which, is “on-time travel” still a thing? My flight plan was interrupted leaving me no options but to wait, read, and reflect. Increasingly, waiting has come to define our everyday experience—whether in an emergency room, at the airport, or on hold with customer “service”. Waiting has become a test of personal resilience: an invitation to suppress frustration, stay calm, and reflect. So, let me reflect.

Most people I met—friends or strangers—seemed wary. Wary of the waiting. Wary of the endless updates. Wary of the inescapable drumbeat of Breaking News.

And yet, what struck me most was their humour. Light, clever, and soothing, it revealed itself when people spoke about life’s small absurdities. Their humour felt human. Grounding.

Here’s the paradox: in public, especially in crowds, people appeared agitated. But in private, they were often calm—remarkably so. This, I believe, captures a deeper truth in the ongoing clash between public and private spheres. The media amplifies public anxiety, but individuals, in their private lives, are developing a quiet, growing resilience.

I’m back. Rested. Reassured that humanity, civility, and compassion still endure.

But I remain a tad uneasy—ever wary of the next wave of Breaking News.