

Simply One Page-A City Split In Two

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision, my own editorial hand fueled by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff, 2514

I make my home in Fort Collins, Colorado, a community that still lives with the daily rumble of freight trains. Eight to ten of them pass straight through the heart of the city every day, their tracks running north and south along Mason Street.

I grew up with this rhythm. Around here, the sound of a distant horn isn't just noise; it's an alert. If you've got somewhere to be across town, you'd better move quickly, or risk sitting at a lowered gate as the cars thunder by. And if you've ever found yourself close enough when one rolls through, you know the drill: cover your ears and wait out the roar.

If you've sat at one of the sidewalk cafés near the tracks, you know what I mean. Conversation halts. Faces sour. The sound is intrusive, obnoxious, borderline unbearable. I've lived long enough around here to say I can't think of many upsides to this intrusion. It interrupts. It splits the city. It divides space, noise, and people.

But maybe that's the point. Life has its trains. Unwelcome interruptions that roar in at full volume, demanding attention. They split our days, intrude on our plans, and leave us shaking our heads.

So here's the question: What do I do with irritation? Do I stew in it? Do I let it define my day? Or is there another way? Maybe, just maybe, there are hidden upsides: moments to pause, reset, notice, or even laugh at the absurdity of it all.

I don't claim to have this figured out. The trains are still loud, and the irritation is still real. But I wonder if learning to live with the rumble, without letting it own me, might be part of the journey.

Reflection Question:

When life's "trains" roar through and interrupt your plans, how do you manage the irritation?