

MAKING FRIENDS WITH A MUSLIM

I heard that one of the grocery checkers has a mother
who is a teacher in Jordan.
So I caught him during his break and asked
what his mother taught English...
to people who want to come to the United States.
The mother lives in Amman was my guess.
He beamed a smile, surprised that I knew some geography.
He was more surprised that I had been to Amman
and had the most romantic evening in my memory
other than evenings with my wife.
I remembered the outdoor dining under the stars
and a bright moon...at a Rotary Club dinner...
with a string quartette playing the *Scheherazade*
in the shadow of an ancient Roman amphitheater.
He knew that place...was curious why I was in Amman.
A biblical archeological study tour I said.
Are you a Christian, a Jesus person...
But not waiting for my answer went on
to tell of biblical sites tourists visit in Jordan...
like where Moses stuck a stick in the ground
and water came out.
Yes, I have visited such places...
a guide even took us to a rock on a hill outside Jerusalem
with a foot-print in it that he declared was the place
where Jesus took off to go up to Heaven.
We both sort of rolled our eyes.
I think he is a Muslim. I'm not sure how literally he takes
such stories. But we told them to each other.
His break was over while I had more questions.
He shook my hand warmly.
Now when he sees me at the Starbucks counter
he waves from his station at check-out counter 5.
It feels good to have a friend from Jordan.
2017 is off to a good start.

Art Morgan, January 3, 2017