

My Dear Sweet Ladies,

The morning glory vines survived the heat of the summer and continue stretching wherever I put more sticks or trellis. That early shortage of twisty ties has reversed itself and I now have an ample enough supply to tie both my bags, \*and\* my vines with them (thanks guys). Moss roses also seem to handle the heat better than some things. The well water is definitely of slightly different composition than the “city” water is. Those things that are sensitive at all to a bit more salinity have died but those things that seem to almost like it, have thrived. A large Neem tree sprung up tall where there was only a small variety of palm, and it helps to shade the palm and the houseplant that continues to flourish now that it’s \*not\* in the house. There are many uses for the Neem tree, if only one knows how to convert the leaves into usable form. Shade is the form I’m using it in currently.

Sand, patio bricks and tiles that are far too hot to walk on barefooted, all attest to the fact that at least during the heat of the day – it is still very very hot here. The evenings have been cooling off though, which is a hopeful sign that soon we can throw open the windows for the short winter. My favorite season at home in Minnesota, is spring. It seems like when spring begins, all is full of hope and promise. But you almost need a really hard winter to appreciate it in it’s fullness of joy. Maybe not, just my muse. Perhaps you can tell I am looking forward to being home again. I am gently pushing the children to finish a little sooner this school year...

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The “Zone” report:

- There are red lights warning you of speed bumps and other possible road anomalies. The problem is that you don’t know what the “anomaly” will be and quite often the speed bump is not there anymore, but further down the road. So all the red warning lights have the effect of crying wolf until you don’t see them anymore. This has rather uncomfortable effects upon the back seat passengers, especially late at night.
- Advertisements for local stores get stuck into the newspaper, or into the front gate. A typical ad with women, will show a light skinned, light eyed woman but in a local garb – Abaya and Shayala. This is a puzzle to me since a typical local woman has dark skin and very dark eyes.

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Seeing another person’s photography is almost like seeing a thing through their eyes. I really enjoy photography exhibits and there are occasional contests to go see. I just got back from one hosted by Mark’s place of employment. These things are not run at all like they are at home, and this one proved to be just as interesting as everything else is

here. A man sat with us for the meal afterward. He is a Sheik of some sort and rank but we weren't sure to whom he was related. He told us a number of interesting stories, revealing his view of some of the issues in his culture. We had met him before – at the mission hospital's Christmas Party. He related how, at this party, he sat next to a man he thought was named "Pasture" :-). When the Christmas carols were sung, a sheet was passed out with the words to the song in english and in arabic. You could sing it in either language. He sang, up until it talked about Jesus being God's son, and he didn't sing those words because, as he said, he can't believe that. His struggle is what he (and other muslims) see as a "moral issue". In addition, he believes there is only one God. He sees the Christian belief in the trinity (he did \*not\* use that term) as a belief in three gods. But what he finished with, was, he claims that when he told the Pastor (who was visiting that evening from somewhere else and I don't remember him) this reason he wouldn't sing that one line, the Pastor got up and moved away from him to sit elsewhere. Now I'm not sure how all this really happened. But his point was that he didn't want to make enemies over one line of a song. He felt the man could have stayed sitting by him. Now in past issues I have discussed how this part of the world uses "facts", and thinks nothing of saying it differently than it happened, if to get to the "moral of the story" that they intend. They are magnificent story-tellers and I believe I see his point, even if the fact were altered slightly. Mark and I left wondering how \*do\* we reach the Islamic people, lovingly. If Jesus is not God's son, and even fully God, then he could not have been the perfect sinless sacrifice. If not that, then we do not have a Savior. This is not a minor point, but one that causes a complete break down in discussion. We continue to ask for wisdom on this point. And yet we know a thorough read through the scriptures would clarify it nicely for anyone who truly seeks truth.

Once again I'll leave you for this month. It's storytime here anyway. We are reading (again) the "Little House" books and are currently in my personal favorite one "Farmer Boy". It's a good way to stay in touch with the good parts of our country and history (i.e. reminds us of home). May God Bless all of you with gratefulness this month as you celebrate Thanksgiving.

Much Love and Fond Affection,

~Pam.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

(Psalms 61:2)

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The glories of morning.