INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Butterworth, the English scholar and the college professor, whose thirst for discovery knows no limits and accordingly leads to his downfall. An eternal journey to darkness, to destiny and eternity. A bitter quest for the self and the unknown that is shrouded in mystery. Africa the land of fertility and sterility, the battle field, and the cemetery where aliens are entrapped, baited and thus preyed ruthlessly. Butterworth’s and Akhona’s unfulfilled desire and passion to join eternity is heart-breaking. The short story is a meticulous reflection of Africanness and the African sensibility.

Dr. Rachid ALDAGGAMIN

It was impossible for me to remember everything. I did not know how to start telling my stories, my memories. It was raining, it was dark outside, I was thinking, I was sad, so sad that I was feeling that my end was coming very soon. I was lost in my memories…It was 6:00 p.m. in a cold fall afternoon; a yellowish sun was disappearing behind grey clouds. Its feeble rays were struggling to go through the brown airport window-panes, drawing up hundreds of hexagons.

The departure time’s last announcement of U.V 1002 flight to a central African country asked the passengers to go to gate number five.

Mr. Eric Butterworth stood up, took two small handbags and hurried to the queue. Ten minutes later, he was in front of two tall, strong, healthy, round faced airport security guards. One of them told Mr. Butterworth to show his passport and his boarding card.

Mr. Eric Butterworth, 45, the security guard read in a low voice.
"years old, university professor, researcher, British, Canadian by birth, and a son of an ex-diplomat," said Mr. Butterworth.
"Do you think that such few words can identify you well?" asked one of the security guards.
"Many.... Many sentences…… Many paragraphs…… Many....... Perhaps many books might identify me," replied Mr. Butterworth.

As soon as he took a seat, Mr. Butterworth leaned his head backward and closed his eyes. A few minutes later, he found himself as if hovering over the Everest, the Rockies, and Kilimanjaro Mountains roaming freely and safe across huge African national parks being part of African wildlife, part of bush a close friend of antelopes, giraffes, elephants, wolves, lions, pumas, zebras, etc…

When Mr. Butterworth was looking at nature in its pure state-nature before God sent Adam to earth-a tender touch on his right shoulder woke him up.
"Would you like to have your dinner, now, Sir?" a very pretty philippian hostess told Mr. Butterworth.
"No, no, leave me alone.....please …please ….leave me alone…..Please."
"Sorry, it’s dinner time, Sir," said a neighbour of his; a middle-aged African man.
"Can you tell me a few words about Africa?" asked Mr. Butterworth.
"Before telling you about Africa let me tell you something that sounds a bit mysterious, something I cannot understand, something with no clear-cut answer. Africa, my dear, is the land of the alternation of cry and laugh, anguish and passion, darkness and light, fertility and sterility, creation and destruction."
The hostess asked the passengers to fasten their seat-belts and refrain from smoking and asked those wandering between the aisles to go back to their seats and informed all the passengers that the plane started landing. Because of the earth gravity exerted on the plane, Mr. Butterworth as if he were getting down from Heaven. It was 6:00 a.m. After the Customs formalities, passengers streamed through the airport. It was a hell-like weather with a high level of humidity. Outside the airport, Mr. Butterworth hurried to the nearest taxi. "The village, in which people in their primitive state live," Mr. Butterworth told the taxi driver "You are mad, aren’t you?" interjected the taxi driver.

"Certainly, I know I’m mad, since for here," replied Mr. Butterworth. The taxi driver uttered a laugh-like interrupted by Mr. Butterworth’s insistence that he will pay him. And with extreme reluctance and a tiny spark of sympathy, the taxi-driver accepted to take Mr. Butterworth, saying: "I take you to hell since you’ll pay." Mr. Butterworth and the taxi driver went on a journey across the wonderful landscape of Africa.

"How long have you been a taxi driver?" asked Mr. Butterworth.

"For 25 years," replied the driver.

"You are a skilled driver, then," said Mr. Butterworth. "Certainly, I’m very keen on cars, in fact I know so many things about motorbikes, cars, lorries, etc ...... My father used to be an excellent driver with no accident all his life long. He taught me to drive

- "When I was15 years old."
- "Nice! How is that?"
- "Well, I can change a wheel in two minutes. I can also change the plays and points, fit new break pads, etc ...."
- "Really good!"

"What about you, Sir?" asked the driver.

"Well, when I was five years old, my family came back from Montreal. In London, I attended a private school as famous as Eton. No one could register, there, unless he was a child of wealthy parents. My great grandfather was one of the English aristocracies. I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. Hardly did my family spend summer holidays in London. We used to spend summers in the most beautiful towns in the world: Tunis, Sousse, Jerba, Dubai, Casablanca, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Cairo, Manila, Jakarta, Kouala Lumpur, Miami, Florida, California and in Latin America most famous towns. On my10th birthday, my father gave me a globe and a coloured world map. I loved the map more than the globe; therefore, I posted it opposite to my desk. And every time I looked at it, Africa seemed to me the centre of the world.

One day my sister, Sarrah, who is five years older than me, came into my room. I put my forefinger on the centre of Africa and told her "Look Sarrah. Sooner or later, I will visit all the countries in Central Africa.

"Oh! If you do so, people, there, will kill you. They aren’t like us," said Sarrah.

"No, no, no. They are kind people. If we love them and understand their cultures and their religions, they’ll do the same."

"What a mountain!" exclaimed Mr. Butterworth.

"Ah, you mean that mountain …over there," asked the taxi driver.

The legend said: The path was curved out of the hill by a handsome young man who loved a girl who loved him too. But the man’s mother disapproved of that love. She went to the witchdoctor. The latter "prescribed" her some plants, the eyes of a camelion and four claws of a cat. And told her to boil the whole and give them to the girl. The woman did as the witchdoctor told her. As a result the girl died. Eventually, the man heard the truth. He killed his mother, sipped some of her blood, and made his dog lick up the rest. Out of pain the mother’s body changed into a serpent-shaped hill. The goddess cursed the man and ordered him to curve a path out of the hill.

"Fantastic!" Mr. Eric Butterworth exclaimed.

"The journey will be a bit long. Why don’t you read this daily newspaper and enjoy yourself?" The taxi driver told Mr. Butterworth. With a large smile unveiling front teeth as white and shining as South African diamonds, Mr. Butterworth took hold of the paper and opened it. On the horoscope page, he read in a low voice:

"Failure is a matter of death. A human being’s life is as short as a shooting star’s. You have done a fine job so far. What matters is that you should carry on doing it. For all the uncertainties that exist in some ways, you can be sure of one important thing. The path ahead is a bit long."

Suddenly, the taxi stopped, and the driver asked Mr. Butterworth to get off. This upset Mr. Butterworth, who exclaimed saying: "What a journey! Do you think that I can get off here, in such climatic conditions? There must be something wrong with you. How can you ask me to get off here?" Said Mr. Butterworth.

"Look! I can’t go farther. They will kill me. They are twice as dangerous as old vampires," replied the taxi driver.

Bewildered by the man’s fear, Mr. Butterworth put his hand inside a small bag and took out some notes.
He selected two and gave them to the man, who thanked Mr. Loungua and wished him a happy journey. As soon as the taxi vanished, Mr. Butterworth was taken by a state of awe and sadness. For the first time in his life, he found himself in an endless place. Hardly could anyone unveil its secrets without putting his life at risk.

As a stranger in such an untrodden place, Mr. Butterworth walked Eastwards. Some time later, two young men almost naked, taking two hackets and wearing African necklaces around their necks, ordered him to stop. He took out two bottles of drink and two bars of chocolate and handed them to the two men. He, therefore, secured his life for at least that very time. The two men, in return, told him to walk in front of them hands stuck upwards. When he arrived, many children, all, naked hurried to Mr. Butterworth and swarmed around him. He gave chocolate, cakes and sweets to the children. He tried to speak with the two men but none understood him.

The crowd drew Akhona’s attention. It was that daughter of the chief of the tribe, called Akhona Washinka. She was reputedly the most beautiful girl in not only the tribe but also in the whole country. She was tall with long black hair, a round African face and large dark black eyes, she was smart and delicate. Her skin looked like porcelain. Her beauty was that of Africa. She was as beautiful as Niagara waterfalls. She was beautiful to the extent that her beauty aches her; hardly could she wander the streets of the capital, its super markets and old sites without being subject to men’s lustful eyes. Her beauty attracted Mr. Eric Butterworth to her world. He, therefore, fell in love with her from the very first sight. His first night, after seeing her, was really hard; sleep did not come to him. He saw her in his dreams. She, therefore, went there. As she saw Mr. Butterworth, Akhona was struck by his elegance. She asked him in correct English; the English of books, saying:

"Do you speak English, Sir?"
"Yes," replied Mr. Butterworth.
"You are welcome, Sir."
"Thank you very much, indeed."

Akhona accompanied Eric Butterworth to her grandmother’s hut. After a long silence, interrupted now and then by far away twitting of birds, Akhona wanted to know what Mr. Butterworth was doing in such a place. She, thereafter, asked him saying: "What…What are you doing here, Mr. Butterworth?"

"What purpose is it behind your visit?" added Akhona.

"Before answering, let me tell you that I looked like that mythical bird called Phoenix, the bird periodically born out of his ash" said Mr. Butterworth then told her that he was a researcher and his mission here was to look for the truth of a very specific thing. For Akhona the answer didn’t seem so much convincing; consequently, she turned the answer in her mind again and again, and instead of asking him more questions, she asked him to sit down. Mr. Butterworth sat on a yellow rug made out of sticks of some equatorial plants. And Akhona went to the other part of the hut, which was divided into two equal parts by a worn-out black curtain.

Few minutes later, Akhona came back with a small bottle and a grey bandage that seemed as if it had been exposed to smoke for a very long time, then started cleaning his injuries. When one sat on such a rug, one felt no difference between sitting it or sitting on a rough floor.

It was for the first time ever that someone in that place cared for Mr. Butterworth. It was Akhona who did so. Why not?

A pretty girl like her aware of her beauty could easily marry anyone providing that one deserves such a beauty.

"How do you feel, now?" asked Akhona.
"Better" replied Mr. Butterworth.
"Could you tell me more about you?" asked Akhona.
"Well, I think that my life hasn’t been as easy as you think," he replied.
"How is that?" Akhona wanted to know eagerly.
"In what way?" what do you want to know more precisely?" asked Mr. Butterworth.
"Your country? Your family? Your wife? Your children? Anything and everything about you?"
"All right, some time I feel all this world is mine. Sometimes, I want to transcend the place, to be part of every part; to dive in the deep dark depths of the oceans or fly higher and higher beyond the solar system, reaching the infinity of the skies… The more Mr. Butterworth talked the farther the reality was for Akhona, who looked amazed at his words. From all what he said, Akhona understood hardly anything. All what she wanted to know was whether Mr. Butterworth was married or not. She, therefore, asked saying, "what about your wife? Is she very pretty?"

"My future wife will be very pretty," with a light smile, Mr. Butterworth, answered.
"Your future wife? What do you mean? "she wanted to know.
"Well…well. I am…I am still single, but not an old bachelor," answered Mr. Butterworth.

It was early morning, to the east; the sun was about 12 inches from the horizon. Lovely bleating of baby sheep was enriching the place. Sheep and goats were going to the grassy field, followed by almost naked herds and white, strong and fierce dogs.
"When will you leave, Mr. Butterworth?" asked Akhona. Before answering her question Mr. Butterworth fell asleep. Akhona, therefore, stood up, went to the other part of the hut. Few minutes later, she came back holding a grey blanked, with which she covered Mr. Butterworth and went out, in front of the hut, she asked two young men to take care of him telling them that Mr. Butterworth was not only a guest but also a messenger respecting his message and added that she would come back the day after.

In the town, Akhona went to a well-known beauty shop in the town-centre. She bought an expensive make-up and two bottles of perfume; one for women and the other for men. She put them in her suit-case and went.

Around the table when the family was having lunch, Akhona told her father that she was ill and she could not go to the university at least for two weeks. And she would love to go to the village to relax and enjoy the fresh air and the quietness of the place, and she told him to go to the doctor and get a sick leave for her.

Mr. Butterworth got on the back of a bird side by side of very lovely girl with large eyes round face long hair as black as a mid-December night.

Mr. Butterworth felt proud to accompany such a pretty girl, who each young man would love to be his .The bird was flying higher and higher and Mr. Butterworth and the girl were enjoying the flight .They were enjoying a very fresh and clean air . They were hovering over every and any high peak on earth .The bird was transcending every and any border .All of a sudden, the wings of the bird stopped hitting down and up and, therefore, it fell to the ground. Mr. Butterworth uttered a piercing cry. As soon as Mr. Butterworth cried, the two men hurried to him and asked him what the matter was.

"I…..I do …I don’t really know whether it has been a nice dream or a night-mare I…I don’t really know..." replied Mr. Butterworth and added: "Water, Water. He drank and asked about Akhona. He was told that Akhona went to the town and that she would come back later on .Such news made him feel a great relief.

Unconsciously he exclaimed saying: "What a surprise!" After a moment of an ultimate silence …silence of the word of dead, he asked one of the two men that he wanted to go out as if he wanted to discover the place.

Mr. Eric Butterworth was allowed to go out of the hut and even go to a nearby mountain .He wished to climb it up and; therefore, take up one of his teenage activities, but neither the time nor the place could allow him to do so. With his two companions, who were almost naked, strong and healthy, he felt somewhat safe. While heading for the mountain, his attention was caught by the whiteness of the ice covering the summit. He was astonished by such coexistence of whiteness and darkness even in that place...

Few minutes later, Mr. Butterworth found two bones of a newly-dead animal. He recalled the first lesson on biology, in the secondary school. It had been about the human skeleton...he also recalled the fear that had struck all his classmates, girls and boys, when the teacher brought the Skelton and started touching it describing all its bones .The pupils were surprised by the teacher’s courage, who asked all the pupils to come close and even touch the skeleton. All the girls refused to do so. Only six boys, Mr. Butterworth, was one of them, dared to come near it and started touching it. The six boys felt proud mainly when the girls encouraged and admired them.

Now Mr. Eric Butterworth was uncertain that the bones were a human being’s. And he was quite more certain that if he had looked for more, he would have found many.

- What a confusion! He could not immediately confirm or refute that those tibia and femur, which might rather be, in a laboratory the bones of someone who died peacefully?

"Are these bones really a treasure or an illusion?"

"What if they are bones of someone who passed away calmly?"

- "Should I ask my self?"

- "Should I ask Akhona?"

He, therefore, asked his companions to return to the village .On his way back Mr. Butterworth could not forgive himself since he had accidentally trodden on a nest with four eggs which were about to hatch. The state of the nest moved him to tears. They stopped for while then carried on walking.....

As soon as Mr. Butterworth and his companions arrived to the village, Akhona’s grandmother called one of Mr. Butterworth companions by name and told him to invite Mr. Butterworth to dine with them. In that village, all the villagers used to dine early. They strongly believe that dinning early is good for health. ".....How delicious this porridge is!" exclaimed Mr. Butterworth.

"What a nice beer! Could I have another glass?" certainly, replied one of them. And, before that banquet was over, Akhona entered.

Mr. Butterworth stood up to welcome and greet her. He took her right hand and kissed it. Akhona felt a warm blood running in her veins.

Mr. Butterworth asked Akhona to sit down and share with him his meal. It was the first time ever when Mr. Butterworth cared for someone more than he used to do. He looked at her as if he wanted to say something or so many things. When Akhona took a bowl of fresh milk her eyes, which were as dark black as a deep well, met his eyes. They looked at one another for a long time their looks transcended the time and
the space and made both of them fly over the purest and cleanest parts of Africa, over Victoria Falls, over the first drops of the Nile before becoming that giant river. While they were hovering higher and higher, Akhona’s grandmother called her to take the tea...

"No dear, sorry .....We don’t want tea...We’re going to go out ....to roam a bit," Akhona told her grandmother, but the latter didn’t reply. It was nearly sunset, Mr. Butterworth and Akhona went out to walk a bit. The wind was free and the odor of the savannah of the nearly mountain perfumed the place. Thousands of birds were coming back. Their lovely twittering was one of the most famous melodies he ever heard.

"Look Akhona, although the period during which I knew you were rather short, I felt as if I had known you before I was born....you started stirring my motions, you started being something meaningful in my life," said Mr. Butterworth.

Akhona smiled and her smile was natural and naïve concealing only one thing that she, in return, shared him nearly the same feelings.

Mr. Butterworth lapsed into silence, and came closer to Akhona his lips dwelt on hers. He kissed her as though he had not kissed anyone before. From now on their relation should be legitimate .That was what dawned upon Mr. Butterworth.

It was a bit late and Mr. Butterworth, Akhona, therefore, had to leave this warmth and return to the village. Mr. Eric Butterworth laid down on a straw mat in front of the hut of Akhona’s grandmother, covering all his body with a white pillow, except his head, whereas, Akhona entered the hut to share her grandmother some African tales.

Mr. Butterworth spent many days enjoying the African hospitality of the villagers, until one day he asked Akhona to accompany him to the town. In the town, Mr. Butterworth needed some cash in local currency. He went to a small bank and then to a shop, bought many presents and told Akhona that he wanted to see her father....

"Mr. Eric Butterworth a British university professor," said Akhona.

"Joseph Washinka, merchant", said Mr. Washinka.

"Pleased to meet you, too."

"Do sit down, please." - "Thank you very much."

As soon as Mr. Butterworth sat down, servants came in the sitting room taking a tray full of African fruits. She put it a tea-table surrounded by five recliners and a very comfortable sofa. A few minutes later, another servant entered the living room with a Chinese pot surrounded by four glasses on a silver tray. As soon as Mr. Washinka started pouring the tea, Mr. Lounguwa felt a fresh air coming from an air-conditioner in the opposite side of the sofa.

Under the air conditioner a black and white photo of a middle –aged man in African clothes armed with a gun was between two posters one of Nelson Mandela and the other one of Patrice Loumanba.

"Who is the man on the photo, Mr. Washinka?" asked Mr. Butterworth.

"My father. Someone who fell in the battle field defending his country, answered Mr. Washinka.

"It’s extraordinary to die for noble ideals and causes," replied Mr. Butterworth.

"Well, Mr. Butterworth, you are Akhona’s teacher?" asked Mr. Washinka.

"No, no, I met Akhona, in your village, I am a tourist. Your country is extraordinary and so are the people," answered Mr. Butterworth.

At that time, a young man in his thirties entered the sitting room. He kissed Washinka’s hand, and before sitting down he shook hands with Mr. Butterworth.

"Leopard, Camilla’s half-brother"

"Eric Butterworth."

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Butterworth."

"Nice to meet you, too."

"Now I should go. Mr. Butterworth make yourself at home," said Mr. Washinka.

"Thank you very much," replied Mr. Butterworth.

"How did you like last night, Mr. Butterworth?" asked Akhona.

"Well, last night before sleeping the colors of the sky took me by surprise. I discovered how much the night, in Africa, was fantastic," said Mr. Butterworth.

"In what way?" asked Akhona.

"Look Akhona. The more I looked at the sky the more I became convinced that man has succeeded a lot in dealing with many topics, ranging from astronomy to evolution. Still, so many things remain without any clear-cut answers, "added Mr. Butterworth.

"Science is often scolded as not being moral," said Akhona.

"You want to say that science destroys nature..."

"Look From my brief experience here, I can conclude that the more primitive and the simple, life is calmer man feels," replied Mr. Butterworth.

"Are primitiveness and simplicity enough?"

"Do they provide clear-cut answers to the ‘big’ questions?" asked Akhona.

"Of course not," answered Mr. Butterworth.

"Why do you bother yourself with all this?"

"What are these strange voices? They sounded as if they had been coming back from beyond the grave!" Eric Butterworth, exclaimed anxiously.

"They are wild animals, they are lions’ roars, wolves’ howls, chimpanzees’ cries, Akhona answered...

"All, in chorus!"

"It’s their way to frighten their prey such as pigs, antelopes, zebras, buffaloes, etc….Which when
hearing these voices and without knowing from which they are coming, they run here and there, they might, hence, risk their lives.

"Extraordinary!" "It's the law of the jungle and nature keeps carrying it out."

"Both the flesh-eaters and their prey do know it."

"Tell me Akhona. What if I go there, now? Do these "nice" creatures acknowledge that I am a guest? Have they heard of my journey?" The journey of a researcher undertaken by a man trying to transcend his limits.

"If you go there, now, they will obviously prey upon you, or at least scatter your members to the four corners of the wind."

"Refrain from flying higher and higher."

"Well, Eric, what shall we do tomorrow?"

"I'd like to visit the woods."

"The woods!"

"Why not? I adore them. I feel as I were a part of them."

"Nonsense! By the way, tell me, when shall we visit the woods will it be tomorrow?"

"Certainly."

"Well. Let it be early in the morning, then."

"Why?"

"To be back before sunset."

You will understand the excitement he felt throughout that night when you know that sleep did not come to him. His brain worked a lot. The hours seemed to him much longer than they normally are. He thought highly of the cricket's stridulating, the frogs' croaks, and the rows' caws.

As soon as the birds started their dawn chorus twitters, Eric moved the cover aside, got down from his bed, and went out of the cottage. He took a small jar right in front of the hut by his left hand and poured some water on his right to wash or at least scatter your members to the four corners of the wind."

When he lifted his head, he saw Akhona coming with a towel on her right shoulder and a tray in her soft hands. On the tray, there were two glasses of milk, two eggs and some slices of coconut. Mr. Butterworth ate them and, then, asked Akhona to go to a nearby cave. Behind Kareka, Eric, Akhona and Pluie went to great lengths to hasten to a cave, or perhaps, indeed, to a shelter.

As soon as the group stepped inside, hundreds of terrified bats screeched and rushed outside, filling the ground.

The wind started blowing, tiny and cold drop of rain made the movement of the group hard Kareka, believing that he knows the place better than the other men do, told Butterworth, Akhona and Pluie to go to a nearby cave. Behind Kareka, Eric, Akhona and Pluie went to great lengths to hasten to a cave, or perhaps, indeed, to a shelter.

As soon as the group stepped inside, hundreds of terrified bats screeched and rushed outside, filling the group with terror except Mr. Butterworth.

Now Eric was at the head of the group, Akhona, at the end of her patience, asked him to go back before it would be late.

The more they stepped forwards, the darker the cave became. Suddenly, Akhona stopped and so did Kareka and Pluie. Eric, however, continued to walk. And no one dared to follow him. He was moving from a dark place to a darker one.

In brief, from darkness to darkness. In this valley of darkness, he saw or thought that he saw shapes, one might see in troubled dreams. He also saw a dead bride dancing graciously. Eric went deeper and deeper. He saw himself grabbing the bride and
kissing her. His spittle was mixed up with hers making a wine-like mixture. To quench his thirst, he wanted to drink as much as possible. He wanted to sober up, but he could not. All of a sudden, he heard loud voices coming from every place of the cave. He heard also a long laugh-like cry. It seemed to him like an echoing sound in an empty large house. The voices stopped; all was silent for a while then, shouted again and again. His ears were, now, no longer able to bear such voices. His head started aching and so did the rest of his body. Things were, really, mixed up in his mind. Deep in suffering as he was, Eric decided to go out and join the group.

Outside the cave, his face looked as pale as a dead man. His eyes looked like those of a dying old man. His clothes were spotted with mud and earth. With a bowed head on the floor, Eric answered none of the questions Akhona, Kareka and Pluie asked him. He, therefore, sank into a sadness of memories and suspicion.

"Tell me Eric, what happened? What did you see there?" Asked Akhona.


"Nonsense!" exclaimed Akhona. Tears filled up her eyes and streamed over her cheeks. Akhona said: "It is God knows as if I had met Eric before I was born. I love him. My love is after all my love," Akhona added. The only response Eric did was that he asked for water and said: "It is as if I never went on a trip."

As the days passed by, Eric became not only less loving in manner but also quick to anger. He started complaining of the weather. One day, he told Akhona that the place started worrying him.

To speak his heart to Akhona, Eric told her that he would like to travel to southern Asia. Akhona told him that she herself, as well, wanted to go to any Asian country. "It is my first time I go to an Asian country. Europeans think that these places are heaven on earth," said Eric.

"Certainly, Sir." replied the hostess.

"Would you like to order, now, Sir?" added the hostess.

"Yes, please. We would like to have some soft drink please." "All right, Sir."

BREAKING NEWS on the BBC: an African plane, Flight number 1002, faded out of the screens of the radars.

BREAKING NEWS: an African plane smashed.

BREAKING NEWS: an African plane crashed down in the Himalayas. The crew and all the passengers were considered lost.

In Heathrow airport, the British minister of the Foreign Affairs, Andrew Butterworth, a boy aged 12, and an African ambassador received the corpse of Eric Butterworth.

In a graveyard, in East London and on a new tombstone, one can read the following: "Here lies in quietness and peace the corpse of Mr. Eric Butterworth; someone who went on an everlasting journey from the unknown to the more unknown, someone who went on a timeless trip from the mysterious to the more mysterious… Such was the eternal journey that has been gone on since eternity." The door was knocking outside. Was it the door? A far away noise was coming from somewhere, from nowhere, from the dark silence outside. Outside, it was very dark, very cold. Was it the door? I could not know, I could not understand what was going around; images, shadows, seas, forests, Africa, airports, travelers, running, screaming, praying for safety, God, Oh my dear, dear God; memory, yes memory… "I have to wake up," said to myself, it was raining outside, it was dark, too dark, and I have to wake up anyway..

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ramzi Marrouchi is a PhD student of Postmodern Jewish American Literature and Theories of texts in Sultan ZinalAbidin University, Malaysia. His doctoral dissertation: “Madness and Subversion in Saul Bellow’s World of Fiction: A Deconstructive Perspective” addresses the way Saul Bellow introduces a peculiar reflection on madness and subversion in the light of Derrida’s theory of deconstruction and Foucault’s assumption with regard to episteme. He participated and published in different international multidisciplinary conferences. He is currently serving the University of Hail, College of Arts, Department of English.