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years to live, or forty, or even thirty, I should have worshipped him and would have counted myself the happiest being on the globe, with so many autumns and winters and springs and summers to see yet.

With these supernatural moonlight nights I finish the story of that dark time, albeit the darkness had not yet gone; to have recalled it and related it briefly as I could once in my life is enough. Let me now go back to the simile of the lost wretch struggling for life in the mangrove swamp. The first sense of having set my foot on a firmer place in that slough of fetid slime, of a wholesome breath of air blown to me from outside the shadow of the black-aborred forest, was when I began to experience intervals of relief from physical pain, when these grew more and more frequent and would extend to entire days, then to weeks, and for a time I would become oblivious of my precarious state. I was still and for a long time subject to attacks, when the pain was intolerable and was like steel driven into my heart, always followed by violent palpitations, which would last for hours. But I found that exercise on foot or horseback made me no worse, and I became more and more venturesome, spending most of my time out of doors, although often troubled with the thought that my passion for Nature was a hindrance to me, a turning aside from the difficult way I had been striving to keep.

Then my elder brother returned, an event of the greatest importance in my life; and as he had not been expected so soon, I was for a minute in doubt that this strange visitor could be my brother, so greatly had he altered in appearance in those five long years