# PROLOGUE

Brazil is a big country. It extends up to 8,515,767.049 km2 making it the fifth biggest country in the world. Hence, it is gifted with a wide range of animal and vegetal life, climate settings and, as expected, an array of cultural diversity that results from the combination of these characteristics with the history linked to the part of the country a person was raised in and with the social and economic factors acting upon each individual.

        This variety of culture brought forth various legends and mythical characters, born from people’s imagination and attempts to comprehend the world around them. Often, these stories ignore regional barriers and make themselves known through the whole country. Although, not rare, being told with sets of minor or major differences at each part of Brazil.

        These are tales that people who were born and raised in Brazil hear about since their childhood. Characters like the Saci, the Cuca, the Curupira and the Headless Mule are a part of Brazil’s popular imagery that are many time depicted in comic and childlike ways.

However, on a closer look, such view does not match for the legends. Most of the time, the legends tell a much more dark version of those characters, with distinct traces of treachery, aggressiveness and, in some instances, even the ability to drive people to a state of madness.

When thinking about that it is important to keep one thing in mind. Legends usually have some truth in it. Then, where is the truth in them? Are them and the characters they talk about really real or just a way for people to understand the unknown? And if they are real, what happened to them?...

**Opening cutscene**

Weird things have being happening… weirder let’s say. There is no such thing as a perfect place to live and that Brazil has its problems is no mystery for any 13 years old (or should not be), but things have been a little too… unique.

        Daily News, News sites and social networks, have been constantly broadcasting stories about strange sights, will-o'-wisp on broad daylight (and above lakes and rivers?!), wind gusts that come and go with no meteorological explanation, an increasing number of robberies with people not even noticing they were robbed… there is even a website publishing pictures of horseshoes’ tracks burning on the pavement of some small country town.

        Anyway, it’s not like you gave much thought to that. Truth be told, you even find all this talk a bit funny… mostly because of the comments that people post about it on the Internet (which really are funny by the way). And that is what you are really thinking about while you listen to music on your cellphone (with almost no battery… again… damn this thing wear off fast) and walk back home from school with your sister, crossing a public park at the South part of Brazil when something really loud caught the attention of both of you.

A boy is running, no more than 15 or 16 years old, black, for some reason he doesn’t wear a shirt… and he is jumping… does he have just one leg? The noise doesn’t come from him. The poor boy seems so scared that he isn’t screaming… You could even wonder if he was not fleeing a robbery if it were not for that big noise that appears to be following here. Yeah sure, that should not be possible but it is the only explanation you can think of since you can’t see anything but a cloud of dust that blows up closer and closer to him at each bang.

You honestly believe you should just run away but the whole scene is so weird that you just got stuck in shock there.

The sound and dust reach the boy and he goes straight to the ground. He doesn’t seem hurt but can’t do much than seat on the ground. You finally start to wonder what might be happening when and old lady starts to slowly approach the boy. She rests her weight on a walking stick while she goes and brings on her back a bag that looks too heavy for her.



There’s no way telling how old she really is but she looks really old… and maybe not too healthy cause, at least from where you are, her skin looks to have a tint of green. Could be the heat maybe, it’s the middle of the summer and she is wearing some heavy clothes on her.

The strangest part however is the way she walks. She is not limping that is not it. She is neither troubled nor tired of carrying that heavy bag around. She just seems to be… enjoying the view of the boy on the floor.

Now that means that something is really messed up here. You started to walk very slowly to behind a tree to make a call to the cops someone like that. As you walk you remember of your sister. You look around and find that she’s already hiding… so thoughtful of her…

You join her on her hiding spot and tell her to get down. You unlock your cellphone and it goes down with no battery… just your luck you think. You look at your sister and ask her to make the call but she can’t find her cell on her bag or backpack… maybe she left it in school? Things keep getting better…

Meanwhile the woman and the boy seem to be talking. You can’t really hear a thing, but by the looks of it you’d say she is asking something to the boy. Whatever it is he doesn’t look happy about it and that seems to be getting on her nerves. They keep arguing and you think you just figured up their names. Saci; Cuca.

Nicknames maybe? Sure the boy is black and is missing one leg. Now that you look more properly the few clothes he wears are definitely red and the old woman really looks like a witch by the way she dresses but that is it right? Anyway the Cuca was not supposed to be a talking alligator with blond hair? Or was it a crocodile? What are you thinking; the difference really doesn’t matter now since there’s no way that the two of them could be the real deal. That is just ridiculous. After all, those are just characters of children’s tales right? This means, they are not real.

While you start to think on this and wonder if this is just some sort of play the woman stamps her walking stick on the ground and then a cauldron just appears. This immediately puts (very) in check the few reasoning you could make thus far. Again, she stamps her walking stick on the ground and with that it changes, resembling some kind of oar or giant wooden spoon. With it, she starts to stir the contents of the cauldron while whispering something.

She picks some of the liquid on her spoon and begins to walk towards the boy as if ready to throw the liquid on him. At that moment some crazy impulse makes you leave your hiding spot, throw yourself at the woman and push her aside. You both hit the ground but it feels harder than you’d imagine. Then you notice something spilling all over you and realize you fell right over the cauldron. The liquid soaks your clothes but most of it falls over the woman.

Steam starts to build up from her body and you can spot wrinkles appearing on her green tinted skin that look suspiciously like scales. She screams and then you hear a huge bang followed by the faint voice of your sister calling your name. You look around and everything seems different, the place seems darker… and wilder. You can see your sister running to you, she looks scared and disoriented. You yell for her to run and hide. She tries do argue but you insist and she goes.

At that moment you hear the woman screen again and when you look at her she is on her knees and looks in pain. The woman grabs her staff with both hands (that really is probably the best definition know) and slams it hard on the ground. This makes another loud bang, much louder than the previous ones. Your ears hurt you feel a strange lack of air and your vision goes dark.

You wake with someone slapping your cheeks, you look around worried but you can’t see any signs of the woman or neither of her cauldron, her staff or her bag… that’s all good. However, you can’t see your sister anywhere too. You stand up in haste and start to call to her, but to no answer.

You get so worried you want to start to cry but someone tells you to calm down and calls to your attention. It is the boy you helped earlier, he has a look of relieve on his face now that he feels safe… was he smoking that pipe since the beginning? Maybe the worry about your sister is start to making you freak out cause up close like this and with that pipe on his mouth you can’t deny he looks like the Saci from all those old tales.

Add to the weirdness that you just realize you are not at the park anymore. Well, you kind of are but it is not like before. The trees and terrain are the same, but the place seems now to have a different tint of color that you just can’t figure out what it is. The sunlight also looks kind of blur… that can’t be helping you.

You start to notice that the park looks much bigger now, there is much bigger green area than before and in addition to the regular trees you have always seen at the park there also are some that you have never noticed before. They actually don’t even look from this world and you really don’t even want to start thinking about those floating (yeah, floating!) platforms hanging up above your head like gravity is no big deal.

After assessing all that you come to two possible conclusions. First of all (and more likely), you are having a mental breakdown. That would just be terrific right now! It means your sister is ok, that somebody will eventually find you, help you and you will wake up in some hospital with no memory of all of this. The other option? This is really happening and you have no idea what is going on.

While you considerer which of these two is really going on and if the boy is the real Saci or not you notice that he is looking at you with a curious and mischievous expression as if trying to figure you out and to have a way to have fun with you. As you really can’t afford to try and read people right now you just ask him where you are.

He introduces himself as Saci, the same one from the legends you used to listen while growing up (so we are really going with option two? Let’s just hope this is still just a part of a mental breakdown that would probably be for the best). He explains that you are still in Brazil. Actually still at the same park you were moments ago, but he also tells you that while it’s the same place, it’s also somewhere else at the same time.



This is the reason why everything you see looks so familiar yet so different at the same time. According to him, this is a world that built by the collective belief of Brazil as a nation, the belief in stories and tales that once happened, or that people believe happened, in an attempt to explain things that they cannot.

It is here that he resides, not just him actually, according to him this is a land inhabited by every creature or character Brazilians ever (truly) though real and a part of their folklore, their culture. It is this belief that nourishes them, that molds their shape and defines their abilities.

In the past, this belief was strong enough for them to be actually able to influence the other side, the side where you live, they could move freely between both world and affect both of them as well, but as years went by and science and reasoning strengthened their hold, Brazilian’s steadily believed less and less on them. Today it is virtually impossible for any of them to maintain a physical appearance outside of this world.

He also tells you that this situation has been infuriating the Cuca for years and that she finally snapped. See, she has always been evil but he’d never think she would take things this far and start to act in order to change it. Their world is in no danger of disappearing so to speak, but with the lower belief it gets unstable and their abilities decrease… in addition, Cuca has found out that she has been reduced to bedtime stories for children and that really made her mad.

Somehow, Cuca managed to open portals to the physical world. He doesn’t know how many yet but he says he intends to find out (there again, that mischievous expression… can you really trust this guy?). Anyway, this has made possible for them again to freely move between the two worlds and that is the source of all the strange events the new are reporting all the time. He also admits that he has taken advantage of this to have some fun on the other side, the surges of gust, the increasing thefts, he says those were mostly his doing (and he says that with such a huge smile on his face, really? Is that this guy’s idea of fun… just great…).

His expression changes as he says that not everyone is as harmless as he is. Besides opening portals to the other side, she is also gathering other myths and new guys (whatever that is supposed to mean…) to do her deeds, either by talking them into it or by forcing them. She’s a powerful witch; she has threatened many to work for her by and has even bewitched some to do so. Clouding their minds and forcing them to obey her. She has even been able to steal some myths essence. Their very abilities and traits and somehow use it as she pleases in their place.

Saci says that is mostly a prankster. He likes to play tricks and pranks on people, but he would hardly intentionally harm someone. Especially in the ways that pleases Cuca. As he and she are yet two of the most well know myths in Brazil their powers are still very powerful. She was expecting to bring him to her side, but since he has refused it she has been chasing him all over the country, either to mind control him or to steal his essence. He doesn’t know which one.

Either way, the potion that was inside her cauldron and ended up spilling on you was meant to do one of these. You think all this sounds unbelievable but to your surprise, he says that the most unique part of it all is your presence on this world. Clearly, whatever was in the cauldron hurt Cuca so much that she fled to recover herself but apparently you, a human, are having no side effects to it… as of yet at least (now that sounds reassuring).

Well, no apparent side effect other than make possible for you to be on this world since that should be pretty much impossible. Anyway, he says that the most important part is getting you out of this world and that since you helped him, he will help you and that the only way to take you out of here is probably to get you to the portal the myths use to your world so you can cross it to.

You start to thank him when you remember of your sister. He says she should be safe on your own world but you tell him that you believe you saw her running to you after the world changed. He says that should not be possible but that he will look for her. In the meantime he tells you to get to the portal, pointing you to its direction and vanishes saying he’ll try to find something about your sister.

After he turns himself into a whirlwind and disappears you wonder again if this is all really happening and if you can really trust this guy. Anyway as you can’t really think of any other thing you can do you start to walk in the direction he pointed and hope that everything will be all right.