

TREATMENT



ACT I

A vast clear river in the Brazilian Countryside fills the landscape. Slowly, a brown water starts to appear along the river. The murky water now invades the river. At first, they don't merge. The brown and the clear water divide the river in two.

The sun hides in the horizon of an empty road in the Southwest of Brazil. A tall middle-aged man, JOAO (40), drives a red truck throughout an unlit road. His sunburned face has signs of negligence. Despite the freedom he feels while driving alone on those roads, João never left the state of Minas Gerais.

His wrinkled eyes stare attentively at the road, next to him there is a giant Indian rooster trapped inside a cage. The animal moves fast in the passenger seat, João covers the cage with a towel, the animal calms down. He looks outside and it's pitch black. He is the only truck parked in the truck stop.

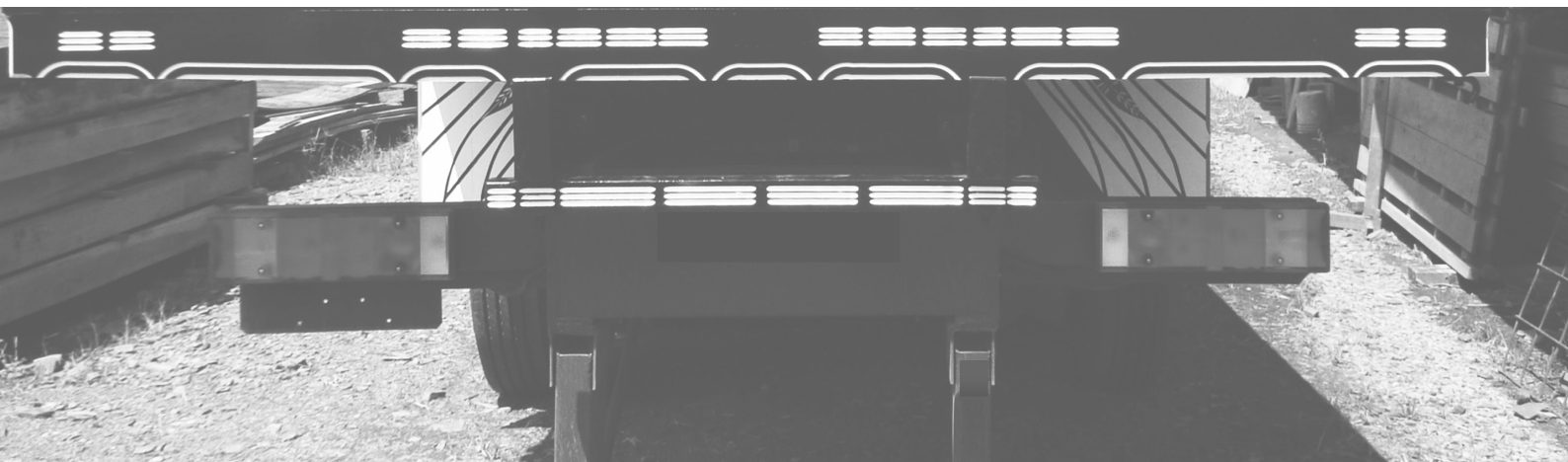
MARTIN (35), a tall and athletic man, left his home at the age of 16 to follow a boxing career. A dream that took him away from the rural life and brought him to the hard reality of living in a big city. Now, at the age of 35, he left prison for fraud and fights in clandestine rings to make a living. After losing two fights, Martin goes back to his studio and finds out that someone broke in and took all the money he had. That night on TV, he sees the news about how the dam broke apart, leaving villagers homeless in Bento Rodrigues. He watches the television as images from his old village covered in mud appears, he tries to recognize the people who are protesting in front of the mining company, he looks for his older brother João. The villagers ask for compensation money for their loss.

Martin grabs his backpack and leaves. In a truck stop, João speaks with other truck drivers and finds more information about the tragedy. He slowly realizes the size of the accident while people advise him to go back home.

João walks through the narrow streets of a destroyed village. Standing in front of a pile of debris, he analysis the structure of what use to be a house. He carefully studies the foundation. BAIXINHA(55) a short woman with strong arms, sees João and walks towards him. She describes in details how the accident happened. She also tells him that, she is organizing the community to start a dialog with the mining company. Baixinha's concern is that the villagers would choose compensation in cash over the village's reconstruction. She wants João's help to convince them they should stay with their lands. But he doesn't take sides. Overwhelmed with the size of the tragedy and how many people were affected by it, João is afraid of what is going to happen next. Baixinha tells him that the community values his opinion and that he would become a great leader to them. João refuses the leadership position.

Martin comes back to the village after being away for ten years. During the meeting with the mining company, Baixinha tries to express her concerns about the land and she tries to talk about preserving it. Surprised to see his brother Martin, João forces himself to ignore him. The company representatives say that each villager will be reimbursed individually and that each case will be analyzed separately and in order for that to happen, they need a list of villagers and properties.

They need to see the documents that state that each person had a house in the area so they can start the process of mapping how many houses were destroyed. Without the signature of the owners of the properties and the right documents they can't start the process. Baixinha insists that they speak as a group instead of analyzing each case separately, she talks about the importance of community but the villagers seem to want to migrate from there and the money seems like the closest solution for that. Martin slowly convinces people that the best option for them would be to get the money and leave the land, João notices how persuasive he is and fears for Baixinha leadership and interest in keeping the land.



Martin tells João that he can fake their younger brother's signature in order to have all the paperwork required to open the process. João ignores him at first. Martin tries again, saying that he received a letter from Lucas saying that he was living in a city close to Caxias do Sul with a woman named, HELENA (42). João, who was very skeptical at first, decides take Martin from the village and go after Lucas. He understands that it would be a good way of removing Martin out of there so Baixinha could gain the support of more villagers.



ACT II

João and Martin travel towards the South of the country. The landscape changes and vast fields fill the horizon. The hostility from local farmers as well as being in a big city start to affect both of them in different ways. The south of Brazil is very different from everything they know. It's cold and even the Portuguese language doesn't sound the same. Martin, who is more used to big cities tries to calm João down who seem to be missing the quiet life of the countryside. The hostility from local farmers as well as being away from what they know starts to affect them both. The silence inside the cabin shows how distant those two people really are.

When they get to Paraná, the main road is blocked and João has to find a different turn. A big protest from the truck drivers spread groups of people everywhere. Thousands of trucks are parked in the roadside blocking the access to the main lane. With no way out, João tells Martin to stay in the truck but he wants to leave and walk around the camp. Martin meets the leader of the movement that convinces João to leave the truck and joins them. The whole movement started with two brothers that are also truck drivers. Martin wants to find a way to keep going but the leader invites them to stay in the camp. We see Martin talking to people, he is very charismatic, at this point he is the opposite of João.

They drive towards a city called São Marcos where they find Helena's house. There, she reveals that Lucas is no longer living with her. He moved to a village in Uruguay. She talks about Lucas and his desire to travel around the world. Helena reveals a side of Lucas that they were not familiar with. She talks about his adventures and how much he loved the road. João is surprised to find more about his young brother.

Martin doesn't like the idea of going to Uruguay. He gets annoyed with that and wants to go back. He feels that the trip is pointless. However, João convinces him to stay by saying that the compensation money will help them all.

Martin wakes up at Helena's place and goes outside. It's a foggy morning, he can't see much. He lights a cigarette. In the mist, he sees a Maned Wolf. Martin stares at the Wolf who stares back at him. Both are motionless. Helena sees Martin and slowly takes him from there. She explains why he can see wolves at that time of the year and somehow that convinces him to continue their journey in order to find Lucas. They go home and find João studying the road map to Uruguay.

They leave Helena's place the next day. João starts to notice that Martin is getting anxious to cross the border. Martin admits that he had problems with the police before. João is not surprised but he calms him down. Martin starts to think about the possibility of them not let him cross the border but João manages the situation very well.

They arrive in Livramento but they can't find Lucas at the address Helena gave them. The house looks abandoned. Under a pouring rain, Martin and João start to argue and it gets to a physical fight. All their stress and tired bodies turn into a crazy mud bath. The door of the neighbors house suddenly opens and an old man shows up with a lantern. They look up, the old man asks what they are doing there, they say they came to see Lucas. He invites them to come inside.

João and Martin wake up and there is no sign of the old man at the house. Outside, the village celebrates the day of Yemanjá (the Goddess of the Sea). All the fishermen carry gifts and flowers for the Goddess. The movement of people is intense. Everybody wears white clothes and the sound of drums fill the air. João and Martin decide to look for Lucas on the streets. It's hard for them to keep track of each other. The sound of the waves breaking in the rocks merges with the drums. Excited to see the ocean for the first time, Martin runs to the sea and João follows him. They dive into the ocean. João feels the strength of the water on his face. He dives deep. Martin let the waves break on his shoulder, in each plunge he feels the serenity under the waves, the silence, the freedom. João looks at the horizon. Martin gets closer and tries to find balance while big waves break on their faces. The brothers finally share a moment.

They go back to the house. The old man is preparing lunch. João asks about Lucas and the old man reveals that he died in a boat accident. The news about the younger brother's death affects João and Martin differently. The old man invites them to stay with him a little longer. He takes João to Lucas burial place while an Martin goes to the city hall to look for Luca's death certificate. The moment they confirm the younger brother's death hits both of them again. All João wants is to see Martin again.



ACT III

Taken by the experience of freedom after crossing the border, Martin decides to continue traveling with no settle destination. He buys a bus ticket and decides to continue traveling alone. This desire comes with the decision of giving his share of the money to João. He signs and gathers all the documents for him.

João drives the truck on an empty road. It rains heavily outside. The passenger seat by his side is empty. His truck gets stuck in a huge puddle of mud. He tries to move the truck but he can't. João leaves the truck and tries to find help to move the truck. A sweet voice coming from a hill gets his attention. As he follows the voice under the rain. He is not worried with the mud that starts to cover him. He follows the man up to the hill. There he sees Martin and Lucas talking. Other people join them.

The three brothers share a moment in silence. Only the sound of the singer and the mud puddles is heard. They are covered in mud. João hugs Lucas tight, the three of them laugh. After a long time, they are reunited.

João wakes up and the hill is empty. His clothes are all covered in mud. The sculpture of rocks stands still. He walks to the truck and there is no sign of Martin or Lucas. Next to him, he digs a worn out photograph that Martin used to keep on his wallet. João flips the photograph, behind it says (home).

The movement on the road is intense. The sun lights the road giving it a dry look to it. Trucks of different sizes and speeds pass through. A Brazilian country song plays inside the truck's cabin. The landscape is lush and green. A mountain chain is spread over the horizon. The air is much warmer. The golden light of the afternoon covers the roadside, on which the truck is the only vehicle. In an empty road, João drives with his eyes focused on the road. The passenger seat is empty, only the photograph remains in the dashboard. He opens the window and lets a fresh breeze of air in.