

When I have asked Helenildo, one of the thousands rubbish pickers of Sao Paulo, what he was thinking about his life, he answered: "I love my kids and my wife, I thank God I don't have drinking habits, and today the sun is shining. I am not rich but I am not starving either, there's people in the street that don't have a roof over their head, I am thankfully happy".

The much-stereotyped favelados have taught me that among the criminals who control the slums, there are also a far bigger number of honest workers, trying to get on with life and with their work in an honest and honourable way. This is an example of an honest, even though sometimes edgy life, of what I call being the Marginal Brazil. Hundreds of slums and millions of people living far below the poverty line, this is what the hidden Brazil is made of.

An improvised Samba, a game at snooker, a sensual dance and a passionate kiss or a song that hails at love and life are just some of the elements of a far richer and complex people like the Brazilians are.