

Why does the Mexican government consider feminist groups a greater threat than the country's most lethal cartels? A grieving father, an inspiring acid attack survivor and a radical feminist group shed light on Mexico's epidemic of violence against women and challenge the culture that allows these crimes to occur and go unpunished.

ACT I Setup

Guacamaya Leaks
Acts of Protest

ACT II Stories

A Grieving Family
A Survivor
The Activists

ACT III March 8, 2023

Women's Day March

ACT I

Through a series of mixed media sequences using cell phone footage and photos, we see the last few years of the acts of vandalism and destruction by some sectors of the feminist movement. Chaotic, energetic. Through text on screen we learn about the government documents leaked by Guacamaya and how the Mexican government has been closely monitoring feminist groups as they're seen as a threat to the nation.

ACT II

We cut to a shot of an altar. A photograph of Nicole Santos Palafox, 7, sits at the center, surrounded by flowers. We're at Jorge Santos' home in Tizayuca, Hidalgo. A community mass, outside Jorge's house, is being organized, honoring Nicole, two years after her life was taken by femicide. At Nicole's mass, we see the community get together to pray and to mourn. In VO, Jorge recounts the days when Nicole was still missing. He's surrounded by friends and family at the ceremony. For him, talking about Nicole and sharing their story keeps her alive. That is part of the reason he is leading a charge to change local laws against violent acts towards women and how they are punished in the state of Hidalgo. Jorge considers himself a feminist, though he doesn't agree with the more violent sectors of the movement. The sun is beginning to set as Jorge and his family take us to the cemetery to bring flowers to Nicole's grave, his surroundings are for the first time quiet and still.

María Elena's hands prep a saxophone inside a backstage area. Her face, covered by a mask, blows into the sax. We hear her voice. She is angry. "I didn't want to be an activist", she says. Sitting in a brightly lit apartment, María Elena recalls the moment her life changed forever. She is a survivor of an acid attack and in the four years since, she has fought incessantly the Mexican judicial system while becoming one of the most outspoken, loved, and controversial activists Mexico has seen. But first and foremost, María Elena is an artist, a musician with deep ties to the music scene, and during an open-air festival in Mexico City, María Elena shines on stage and leverages her growing popularity to amplify her message. She is tired of hearing people and the government complain about radical activism. She wants those same people to feel rage and frustration when thousands of Mexican women's lives are threatened and taken from them.

On a rooftop near downtown Mexico City a group of 5 women are gathered around a table. They wear black ski masks, helmets and green bandanas around their necks. They're part of a feminist collective called Michis Aborteros. They discuss the reasons they are the first line of defense at protests and the acts that have gotten them jailed and harassed. One of the

members recounts the moment she learned of the Guacamaya Leaks. The women share the reasons they joined the collective and the impact they hope the group will have on society.

ACT III

We cut to the International Women's Day March in downtown Mexico City. The march fills the streets with the color purple and signs condemning the government and asking for peace and justice. Michis Aborteros members lead a contingent as thousands of women join a loud and powerful chorus. Thousands of women walk down Reforma street, hurt, angry, and resilient. Women, coming from all walks of life, come together at this event. We see María Elena, a leader, marching with thousands like her. At a different point of the march Jorge walks in the Zocalo. Small bonfires are lit by women activists around him. The march progressively feels more urgent, with different stopping points along downtown serving as impromptu stages for women to lead inspiring speeches and chants. Led by Michis Aborteros, a group of protesters clash with police. For their safety, the members of Michis Aborteros decide to leave the march early. Even so, hundreds more continue to rally as March 8, 2023 comes to a close.

We see images of the city on a new day. The movement has left an imprint on the city's streets. Through text on screen we learn that over 100,000 people took to the streets on International Women's Day. Closing text puts things into perspective: Around 10 women are murdered every day in the country and 95% of cases go unpunished.

This film is dedicated to Michis Aborteros, María Elena, and Jorge Santos who continue their fight for justice.

