

Created By:  
Mariana Santangelo



# SOLDADERA

*Sometimes a WOMAN becomes  
the MAN in her life ...*

## LOGLINE:

A woman on the run, takes on a male identity during the Mexican Revolution and develops an unexpected attraction for another woman...

In the process she comes face to face with the sinister political reasons behind the Revolution.

# INTRODUCTION

After decades of absolute power, the regime of Porfirio Diaz in Mexico was challenged by new democratic ideas.

In 1910 thousands of impoverished farmers and citizens took up arms against the Federal Army and joined the ranks of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, giving way to a decade long civil war known as:

The Mexican Revolution.



Like in any war, women suffered the most loss and abuse.

Thousands of women joined their husbands, fathers or sons in the battle fields across Mexico, showcasing unimaginable strength and courage.

They served as messengers, cooks, nurses, or spies, many times carrying a baby on their chests and a shotgun on their backs.

For the most part, they were raped, kidnapped and used as war trophies or sex slaves...



To avoid abductions some women took up male identities.

Hiding in plain sight, they fought fiercely battle after battle, producing important victories for Villa and Zapata.



A black and white photograph of a woman from the waist up. She is wearing a traditional Mexican huipil and a long, patterned skirt. She is holding a small child in her arms. The background is dark and out of focus.

The women of the Mexican  
Revolution were essential logistic,  
moral and emotional support.

Their names were lost in history  
and forgotten in obscurity.

They were known as:

“SOLDADERAS”

## **THE CONCEPT:**

“SOLDADERA” is a 10 episodes TV series that takes us into the violent world of the Mexican Revolution, seen through the eyes of **AURELIA ROBLES**:

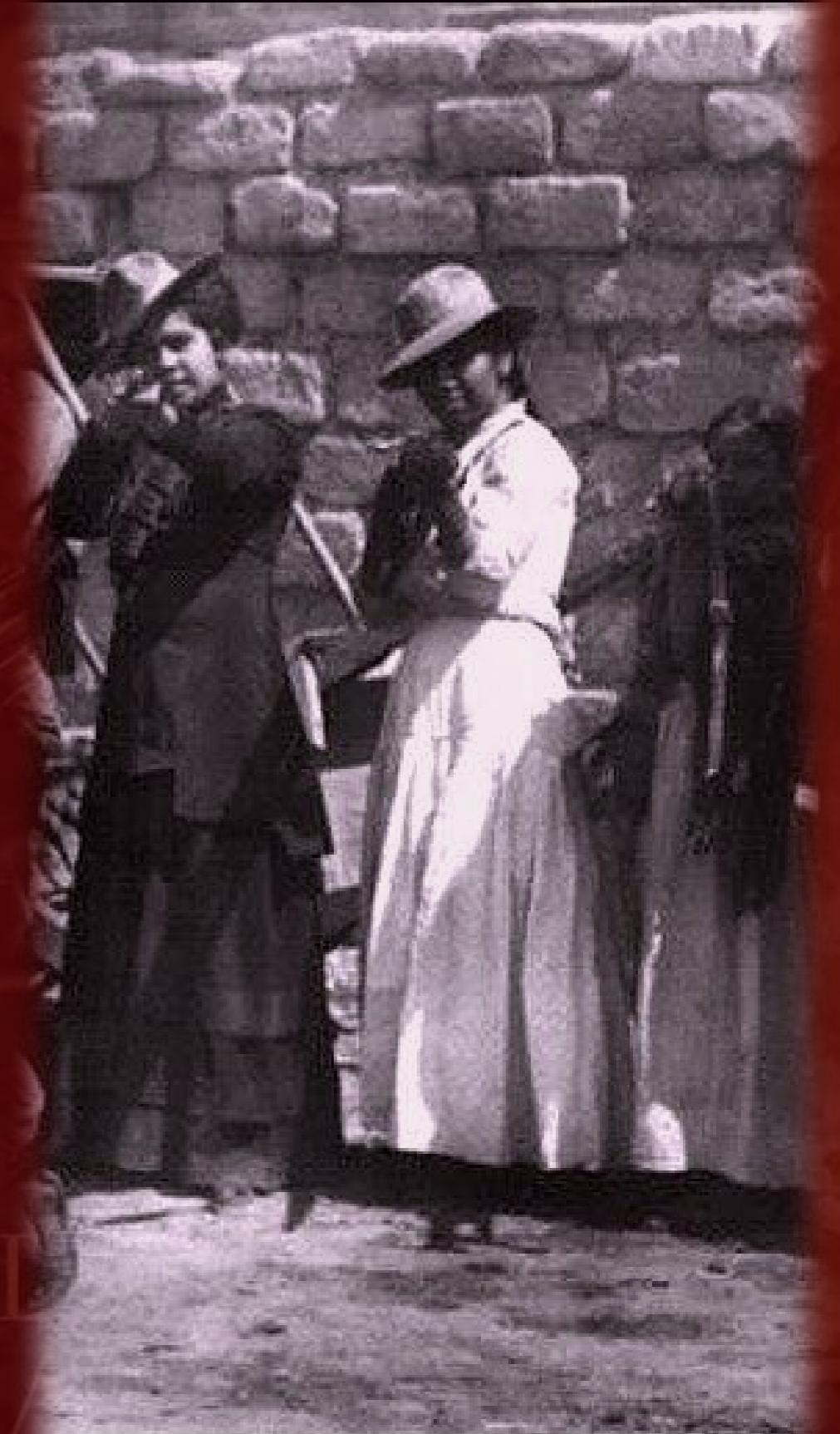
A Mexican woman hiding from a group of men who want her dead.

Posing as a man, she is able to fool her enemies and meet her destiny ...



“SOLDADERA” focuses on the violence against women during the Mexican Revolution, seen from Aurelia’s perspective and her courageous stand against her enemies and the misogynistic society that suffocates her.

It is also a gender story, one that speaks to us about women’s role in society and their place in military history.



SOLDADERA

## **AURELIA ROBLES / “AURELIO”**

A courageous and ambitious young soldier with a secret.

She poses as a man while escaping from a group of men who are trying to kill her. In the process she becomes an accomplished military leader with a following of her own.

Her popularity in the military grows, and she even plays with the idea of becoming president of Mexico! when she makes a deal with a mysterious American businessman.

As she evades her enemies, she faces her own demise when she develops an unexpected attraction for another woman ...



MUJER VALIENTE

## PANCHO VILLA

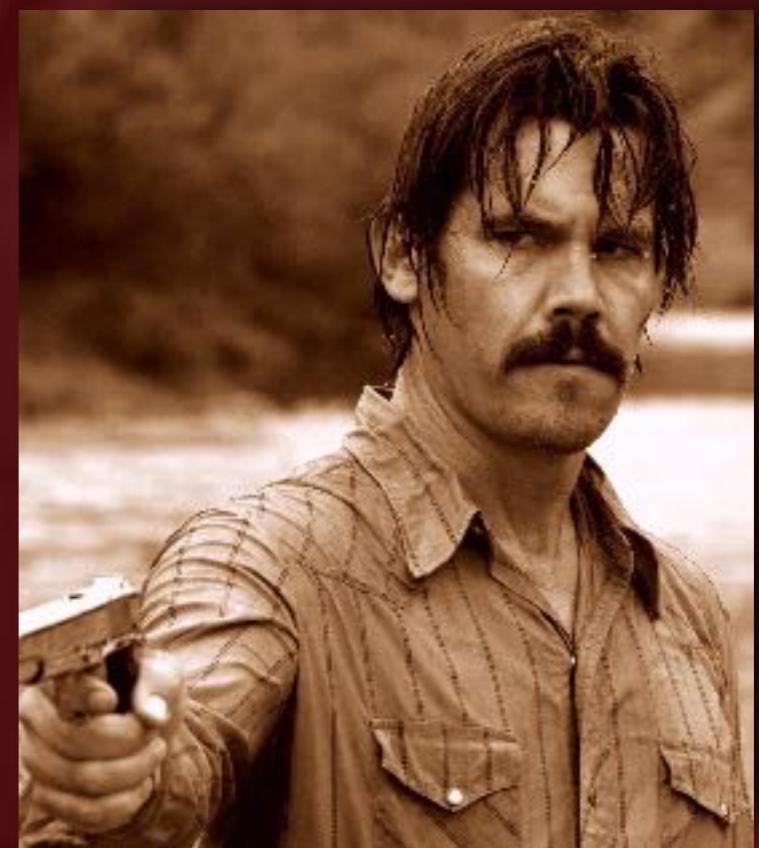
One of the most charismatic men of the 20th Century.  
Street smart, voracious, violent and idealistic.  
He goes from hero to ruthless villain from one episode to  
the other.



He takes special interest in “Aurelio”, whom he mentors. Villa builds his own legend as he leads thousands of men who see him as a Messiah . He struggles with his own demons, his greed, his vengeful nature and his aspirations to be taken seriously as a political leader.

He loves his men, but has no tolerance for cowardice or traitors and becomes extremely paranoid.

He trusts Aurelia, who he believes to be “Juan Jose”.



# THE OCHOA BROTHERS

## JAVIER OCHOA

A high ranking soldier in the Federal Army. Rich and powerful, he's obsessed with avenging the death of his brother - Manuel.

His social status and his position in the army help him wage a personal war against Aurelia Robles, who killed Manuel before the revolution.



## MANUEL OCHOA

Seen through flashbacks or as a ghost that only Javier can see. Manuel was a charismatic millionaire who had strong connections to Porfirio Diaz and took over land that belonged to farmers, among them, Aurelia's family.

He was obsessed with Aurelia who worked for him as a cook. Aurelia killed him in self defense in a confusing episode

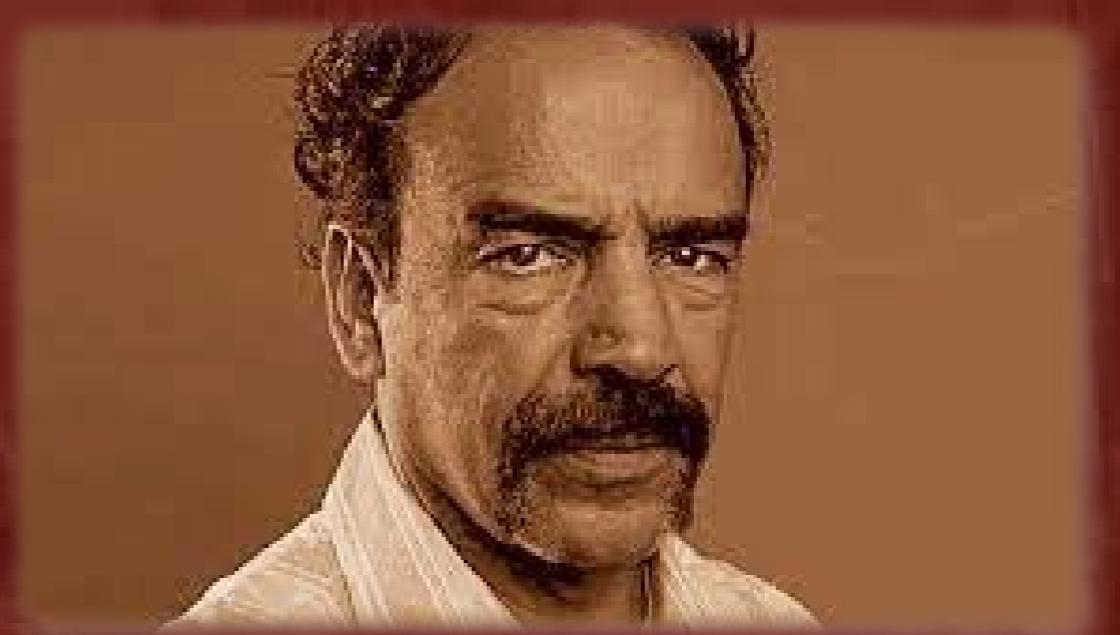


## **JOSEFO RAMIREZ**

Josefo is Aurelia's stepfather. A violent misogynist who will do anything for money.

He chases Aurelia relentlessly in order to bring her to his boss: JAVIER OCHOA who has promised him a reward.

His ambitions are higher than his abilities and maybe that is why he drinks excessively.

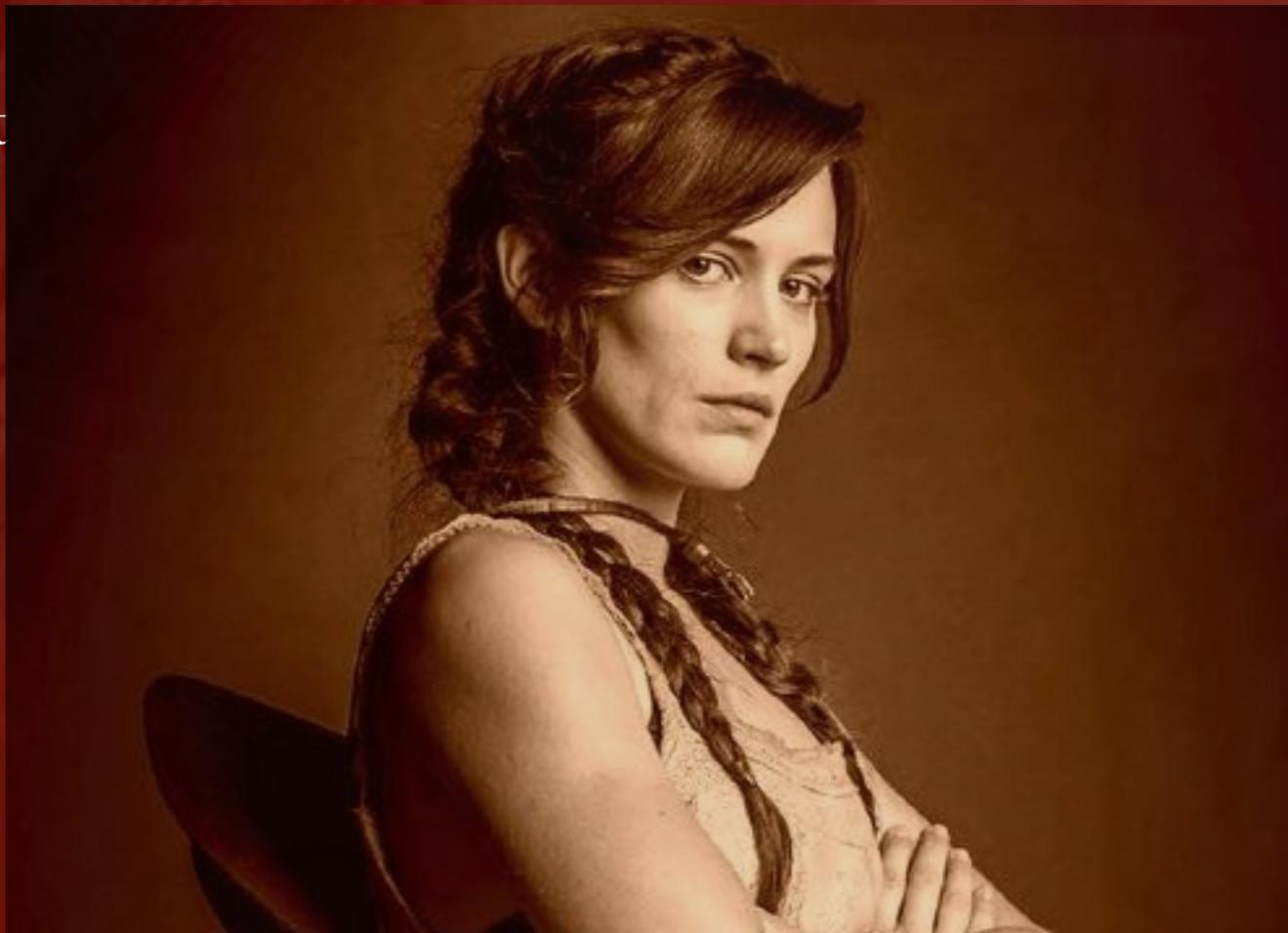


## CONSUELO JIMENEZ

Humble, vivacious and visibly distraught by the trauma of war, Consuelo is an excellent cook, a healer and a gifted medium. (She can speak with the dead, or so she says...)

After her family was killed, Consuelo wandered from one battalion to the other, escaping abuse and hunger, surviving on barter, odd jobs and charging money to communicate with people's dead relatives.

She falls madly in love with Aurelia (whom she believes is a man) and crosses paths with Javier Ochoa, who hires her to communicate with his dead brother.



## **IGNACIO GUERRERO**

We meet him later on in the season, but he is Aurelia's first love.

A fierce warrior who believes in the Revolution as the only means for Mexicans to access social and economic justice. He is willing to die for his loved ones and for his country.

He too looks for Aurelia incessantly to rekindle their romance.



## OTHER CHARACTERS

### TAMARO

Pancho Villa's right hand man. He looks for his daughters who were kidnapped by a group of rebels. Tamaro finds out early on, that "Aurelio" is actually a woman. He has a secret of his own...



### DIEGO

A soldier in Pancho Villa's army who sees in his leader a father figure. Jealous of the new "Aurelio" who Villa mentors, Diego joins Josefo in his search for Aurelia when he sees an opportunity to make money.



## **JOHN REED**

An idealistic bohemian American journalist who travels from NYC to El Paso, Texas to interview the most famous man in the world: Pancho Villa.

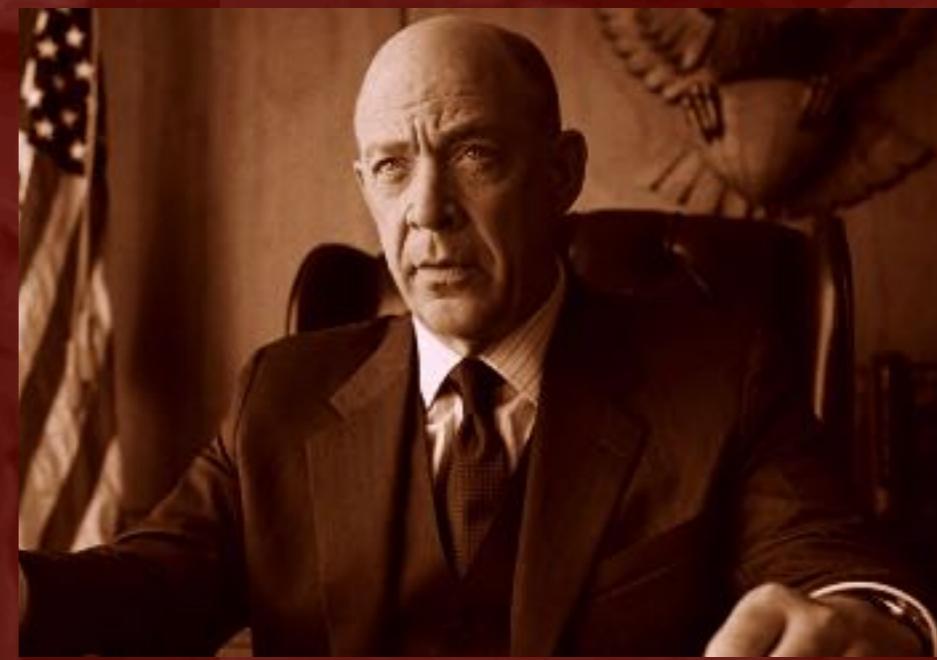
But when he gets there, he learns that the U.S Government is recruiting him as a spy. He agrees to spy on Villa's movements in exchange for the interview of his lifetime. But after a few months with Villa, he becomes an admirer of the revolutionary leader and decides on other plans. ...



(This is a character based on the real John Reed)

## **SHERBURNE HOPKINS**

One of the most powerful men at the time. He works for the US Government and is friends with the President, and the Rockefellers. He recruits John Reed as a spy to get Villa to agree to sell oil to the Rockefellers in exchange for weapons. When Villa proves too reckless to handle, Hopkins betrays him and Villa sees his demise.



(This character is based on the real Sherburne Hopkins)

# The Pilot

- ★ **-MEXICO - 1914.**      *4 years into the Revolution. The country is an open wound.*
- ★ - During a battle for Chihuahua PANCHO VILLA and his regiment face off against the Federal Army. He's ambushed and surrounded by several Federal soldiers, but a YOUNG SOLDIER courageously intervenes to save him. This is: AURELIO. After a long stand off, Villa wins the battle. He thanks Aurelio, whom he declares a "hero of the Revolution" and the men and women in his army cheer. Impressed by the skillful Aurelio, Villa, invites him to his headquarters for dinner that night.
- ★ Suddenly, the celebration is interrupted by a shootout in the town's church. Villa assigns Aurelio the mission to take the church back, and Aurelio jumps at the opportunity to show leadership. He selects a few men to come with him. When they get to the church, they find dozens of Villa soldiers dead and the church locked. Aurelio is able to open the doors. He sees that dozens of women and children are hiding inside. A baby cries. Aurelio signals for his men to be quiet. He walks stealthily inside. Suddenly, the PRIEST hits Aurelio in the back of the head with a shotgun and Aurelio passes out. - *Black*
- ★ **-FLASHBACK: 1910** - In a beautiful country scenery, way before the war, a *YOUNG WOMAN* *playfully wrestles with a YOUNG MAN. She discovers a stash of cards hidden in the young man's boots. She calls him a "cheater!" he laughs and begs for another chance at the game. They kiss.*
- ★ **-BACK TO 1914-** Back in the church, Aurelio recovers. When he opens his eyes, he sees that the priest has been killed and a WOMAN is held down by TWO MEN who attempt to rape her. This is CONSUELO JIMENEZ. Aurelio stops the attack, saving Consuelo, and a fight ensues. Pancho Villa comes in and breaks the fight between his men, siding with Aurelio and reprimanding the rapists. Before they leave, the two men whisper into Aurelio's ear, promising to kill him.

- ★ **-In New York City-** JOHN REED, a reporter, is released from jail after speaking up for local strikers. His bride: LOUISE bears more bad news: he has been fired from the New York Herald! John wants to change the world with his writing and yearns for more political relevance.
- ★ **-Back in Mexico,** Villa takes the town, the women and the Mayor's house. He also orders to execute all the captive Federal Soldiers who refuse to join him. Among the prisoners is: JOSEFO.
- ★ -Josefo quickly changes sides and begs Villa for forgiveness, pledging loyalty to him instead of the Federal Army. Villa forces Josefo to execute the captive soldiers. To show his loyalty, Josefo mercilessly executes them all. But, Villa decides he doesn't trust a man who will kill men from his own army, and decides to shoot him.
- ★ - Josefo begs for his life and convinces Villa to spare him, when he claims that he can get a contact with the same arms dealer who supplies weapons to the Federal Army. Getting his hands on the new “machine guns, turns out to be tempting for Villa who lets Josefo join his army. ...
- ★ -As this dialogue goes on, Aurelio recognizes Josefo. There is definitely a past between Josefo and Aurelio. ...
- ★ **-FLASHBACK: 1910** - JOSEFO beats a woman (his wife). The YOUNG WOMAN from the previous flashback tries to stop Josefo, but he beats her too.

- ★ -Back to 1914 - During dinner with Pancho Villa, Aurelio is introduced to Villa's most trusted men: DIEGO, TAMARO and ENRIQUE. Villa sees himself in the young Aurelio and tells a story about his past. Then:
- ★ -Villa names Aurelio "Captain" and gives him a special reward: a thick block of gold and a woman: CONSUELO.
- ★ -When they're alone, Consuelo offers herself to Aurelio, but he rejects her and sends her away. Consuelo tells Aurelio that she wants to serve him and stay with him. Something is off with Consuelo, who seems to be traumatized by the war. Aurelio thanks her, avoiding her kisses and leaves.
- ★ - Outside, Tamaro and Enrique, have been listening to the conversation. Tamaro doesn't trust Aurelio and decides to keep a close tap on him.
- ★ Consuelo and other WOMEN who belong to Villa's army, speculate on who will win Aurelio's heart first.
- ★ -Meanwhile, Josefo asks Diego to help him find someone: a special woman that he is looking for, and in exchange he offers a reward. Diego agrees.
- ★ -In NYC's Greenwich Village, John Reed receives a mysterious telegram:
  - ★ **"Pancho Villa. One on One. Hotel Del Norte. El Paso, Texas"**
- ★ An interview with Pancho Villa is just what Reed needs to make his name as a journalist. But Louise is not so happy when she learns that John will go to El Paso by himself and threatens to leave him and call off the wedding.

- -Back in Chihuahua, Aurelio inquires about Josefo in the local cantina, where many of Villa's men are celebrating their victory. When they see Aurelio, they all cheer for him: the new hero of the revolution!
- -Suddenly, Aurelio changes his attitude. ... Concerned, he runs into the bathroom, locking the door. He pulls down his pants and we see that they are stained with blood.
- -Quickly, Aurelio takes off his jacket, then his shirt. Surprisingly, his entire upper body is wrapped in gauze. He starts to untie the long pieces of gauze revealing the soft curves of a female body.
- Aurelio is actually a WOMAN!!... This is: AURELIA.
- -We get a closer look at her face once again, and we realize that SHE is the woman from the flashbacks ... She continues to unwrap the gauze around her breasts and cuts pieces of it with her teeth, placing them between her legs to use as sanitary towels.
- -Then: from out of nowhere: Tamaro is in the room!...discovering Aurelia's secret. He approaches lasciviously and threatens to tell Villa her secret unless... . . .

•

**END PILOT.**

## The Backstory

Forced by her stepfather (JOSEFO) to work as a maid for a powerful man, named OCHOA, Aurelia dodged sexual abuse until she finally killed him in self defense.

On the run, she goes from a wild hacienda girl who dreams of adventure, to arm smuggler, to soldier in Pancho Villa's army.

Posing as a man, Aurelia turns out to be a skillful soldier and she earns Pancho Villa's trust.



As she accumulates military success, she hides from the men who want to avenge Ochoa's death.

She faces insurmountable challenges, her inner demons and her own internal revolution when she meets CONSUELO JIMENEZ ...

A woman with long dark hair tied back, wearing a vibrant red sleeveless dress, stands in a lush green field. She is looking down at a small bouquet of flowers she is holding. The background is filled with tall grass and wildflowers under a clear blue sky.

Aurelia dares to fight back, and finds in the revolution an opportunity to strive as an individual, to claim her rights and come to terms with her own identity.

# The World Of “SOLDADERA”



## SOLDADERA

Mexico



battle to fight Villa and Zapata

Machine guns and new weapons were introduced



It is estimated that more than 3 million people died



The rich fled Mexico and the ones that stayed  
behind were raided and killed



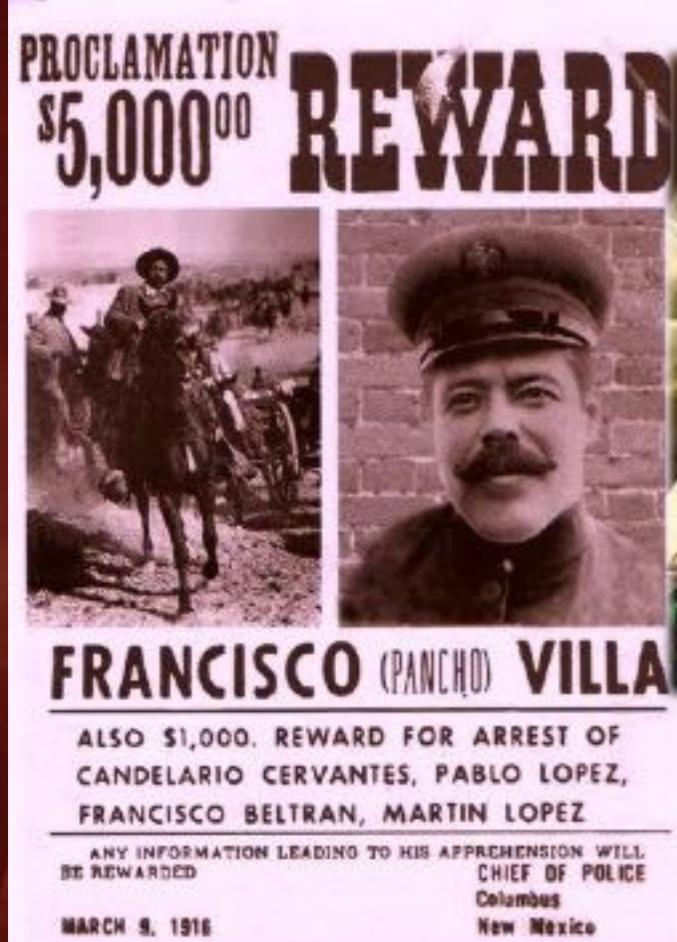
# SOLDADERA



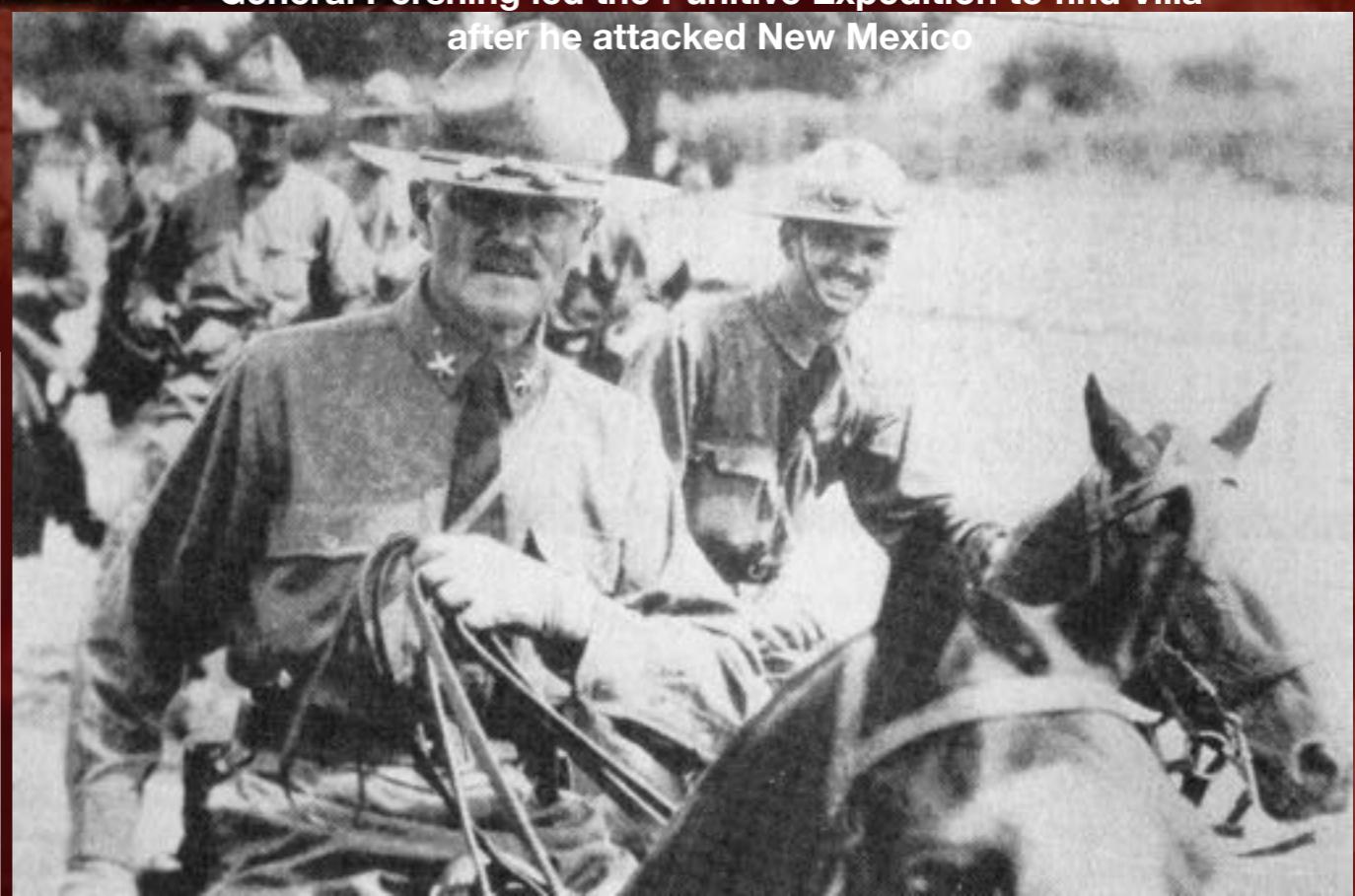
Executions were a common scene as society grew  
more and more divided



Pancho Villa attacked New Mexico being the only invasion of US soil by a foreigner



General Pershing led the Punitive Expedition to find Villa  
after he attacked New Mexico



# THE WOMEN OF “SOLDADERA”

Intellectuals, writers and teachers supported the Revolution as means to gain political relevance and obtain the right to vote



Thousands joined their men in the battlefields.  
Many more were forced to serve the militias.



More intrepid women, joined the Revolution  
to fight and access  
military careers disguised as men.

Created By:  
Mariana Santangelo



# SOLDADUERA

*Sometimes a WOMAN becomes  
the MAN in her life ...*