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Amores perros

Love's a Bitch

Alejandro González Iñárritu

MEXICO, 2000

153 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **Altavista Films/ Zeta Film**

Executive Producer: **Francisco Gonzalez Compean, Martha Sosa Elizondo**

Producer: **Alejandro González Iñárritu**

Screenplay: **Guillermo Arriaga**

Cinematographer: **Rodrigo Prieto**

Editor: **Alejandro González Iñárritu,**

Luis Carballar, Fernando Pérez Unda

Production Designer: **Brigitte Broch**

Sound: **Martin Hernandez**

Music: **Gustavo Santaolla**

Principal Cast: **Emilio Echevarría, Gael García Bernal, Goya Toledo, Alvaro Guerrero, Vanessa Bauche, Marco Pérez, Gustavo Sánchez Parra**

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Love's a Bitch, Alejandro González Iñárritu's extremely impressive first film, is at once riveting, dazzling and provocative. Its three stories of ideal love gone terribly wrong are braided together by one fateful event, and permeated by an ironic and allegorical canine motif.

In the first story, adolescent Octavio (Gael García Bernal) plots to run away with Susana (Vanessa Bauche), the pregnant wife of his older brother Ramiro (Marco Pérez). To make some quick money, Octavio enters his dog Cofi in clandestine dog-fights. When Octavio's plan to rid Susana of her brutish husband goes sour, he loses both Susana and his prize money. To add insult to injury, Jarocho (Gustavo Sánchez Parra), a rival intent on ending Cofi's winning streak, decides to play dirty. Octavio and his dog are forced to flee, with Jarocho in hot pursuit, ending when Octavio's car slams into another at an intersection.

The second story begins with Daniel (Alvaro Guerrero), an executive, who leaves his family for supermodel Valeria (Goya Toledo). When Valeria's car is hit by Octavio's, her life is changed instantly. Daniel, who once had everything, now feels trapped. Meanwhile, Valeria's cute dog Richi discovers a hole in the floor of her apartment and decides to go exploring. He becomes trapped there for several days, a symbol of Daniel and Valeria's desperate predicament.

The third tale involves old El Chivo (in a wonderful performance by Emilio

Echevarría), an ex-guerilla turned assassin. He arrives at the scene of the accident in time to save Cofi, taking him to his hovel to join his pack of stray dogs. The old man uses the predicament to reconcile with his past and establish contact with his long lost daughter. Thus the film comes full circle.

In shaping these ironic, cruel, and all-too-human experiences, *Love's a Bitch* pointedly equates its characters' relationships with their dogs to their relationships with humans. With this electrifying debut, rising star Alejandro González Iñárritu proves his career is one to watch.

■ **Ramiro Puerta**

Alejandro González Iñárritu was born in 1963 in Mexico City. He started his career as a radio DJ. He directed numerous works for television before making his feature film debut *Love's a Bitch* (00).

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