

Racy photos and troubling questions about his wife's past that could derail Trump



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'to become somebody'. There were several boyfriends. One of them, Jure Zorcic, met 19-year-old 'Melanija from Sevnica', as she introduced herself, back in 1989.

Jure says Melania had been involved in a relationship with a handsome young man called Gregor Erbeznik, a brilliant skier and surfer, who broke her heart.

'She was a beautiful girl,' recalls Jure, a 47-year-old businessman who has never married.

'The night I first saw her, I nearly fell off my Vespa. But what was I to Melania? Just someone to make Gregor jealous.'

'It was Gregor she loved, Gregor is the key to everything about Melania, her true love. We lasted about six months before she left me and went back to Gregor.'

Gregor, meanwhile, does not talk about Melania. Contacted by the Mail, he denied a romance. 'We were friends and that's it,' he said.

While Melania's personal life was complex, she did find time to work. In 1992, she took part in a fashion video in which she had the role of the 'first lady of fashion'. Andrej Kosak was the director.

'Melania was playing the role of the First Lady of America,' he recalls. 'Someone had the idea, the First Lady of Fashion. Melania played the role very well. It's funny how things turn out.'

Not long after this video was shot, Melania left Slovenia to try to make it as a model. She went Paris and

Milan and by the mid-Nineties was living in New York, with the Americanised name of Melania Knauss.

According to Jure Zorcic, Gregor Erbeznik visited Melania a few times after she left Slovenia, but they split for good not long after she moved to New York.

Was this because by now she had met Trump?

Biography writer Bojan Pozar has been told conflicting stories.

One is that they were introduced at a restaurant in New York's Soho, another that it was at a party given by a well known basketball player.

'She has four billion reasons to be happy'

But his sources agree on one thing — that it wasn't at the Kit Kat Club in 1998.

There is no doubt that after that raunchy photo shoot, Melania took on more coveted modelling jobs. This change in her fortunes, says Bojan Pozar, came about as a result of her connection to Trump.

She got the front cover with the Spanish Harper's Bazaar, his book says, 'only after rumours began to spread within the industry that she

was with Donald Trump'. Trump, whose fortune is estimated to be \$4 billion, separated from Marla Maples in 1997 (they divorced in 1999). That 'first meeting' between Trump and Melania at the Kit Kat Club took place the following year.

Their romance began and Melania settled into the life of a princess, dividing her time between a palatial apartment in Trump Tower in Manhattan and Trump's Palm Beach estate, Mar-a-Lago.

In 2001, former boyfriend Jure Zorcic went on holiday to New York and decided to drop by Trump Tower and look her up.

'I went in and said I was a friend of Melania's and could they call her and tell her I was here,' recalls Jure. I was rather surprised that security came over and told me she wasn't here, but I was able to leave the details of where I was staying.

'Two days later, a call came in from Melania on the hotel phone and she said she could meet me. We arranged to meet in a cafe in Saks department store on Fifth Avenue. I took a friend, a girl, with me.'

'Melania came in, all dressed up, with a bodyguard. The bodyguard sat a few tables away. 'She was very serious, there was no fun in her. She was speaking English and I said, "Melania, why aren't you speaking Slovenian?" After about ten minutes she did start speaking Slovenian. But she didn't ask about anyone back home — not even Gregor.' He adds: 'Afterwards we

Naked ambition: A 1995 nude shoot featuring Melania has resurfaced

went out onto the street and her bodyguard took a picture of us. That was the last time I saw her.

'Melania looks nothing like "Melanija from Sevnica". She is an American beauty now.' This is a reference to her sophisticated looks — her super-smooth skin, cat-like eyes and highly defined cheekbones bear little resemblance to the young girl he remembers.

At her wedding in 2005, Melania wore a \$200,000 John Galiano gown. Around 3,000 roses were strewn over the Grand Marnier chocolate truffle cake. Today Melania, who has a ten-year-old son, Barron, with Trump, lives a life of unimaginable luxury, with chefs, housekeepers and other staff catering to her every whim.

Her ex-boyfriend, Peter Butoin,

says Melania's sister, Ines, with whom he claims he had a relationship after splitting from Melania, told him she lived in 'a golden cage'.

'I think she's been happy with Trump,' he says. 'She has four billion reasons to be happy, doesn't she?'

But is she happy now? On stage during the campaign, Melania hasn't looked entirely comfortable. She can't be enjoying the scrutiny.

It would be supremely ironic if, given Trump's reputation as a liability, it were to be his wife who ultimately puts paid to his long-held dream to become President of the United States.

■ Additional reporting: Dominik Lemanski and Annette Witheridge