

The dazzling model behind the Trump split

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MARLA MAPLES



TRUMP VS. TRUMP

BILLION DOLLAR BLOWUP

She wants the Plaza, he'll take Manhattan. America's gaudiest couple square off in an old-fashioned battle over babes and bucks. Direct from Aspen, Palm Beach and New York City, here's the latest dish

Ivana and 'The Donald'





COVER

THE TRUMPS HEAD FOR DIVORCE COURT

The biggest! The flashiest! The most public!
Yes, it's Donald and Ivana's marital bust-up



PAUL ADAM

After news of the split hit the papers, Ivana ducked paparazzi in her limo with her mother. Two years earlier, she and Donald had shown off their baroque Trump Tower master bedroom, left.

In a decade of glitz, they were the glitziest; in a decade of greed, they were the greediest: He the scrappy investor who made a fortune wheeling and dealing real estate, she the gregarious, Czech-born outsider who charmed and clawed her way into New York's most refined social circles. As they fashioned an empire in their own image—and plastered their moniker on nearly every piece of steel, brick and glass they owned—they became, as *New York Newsday* columnist James Revson quipped, “larger than *Dynasty*.” They had it, and they flaunted it in a brash, bold, brazen way that seemed to typify their times. So when, only six weeks into their 12-year marriage, it seemed the perfectly scripted end to a decade of flash and cash. In a fitting coda, a few days later Drexel Burnham, the brokerage house whose junk bonds had fueled the '80s with gushers of debt, declared bankruptcy. The Age of Trump seemed over, and a shaken New York peered curiously at the wreckage.

Though rumors of the seismic marital rift had whipped round the social circuit for months, even the ladies who lunch gasped when the Feb. 11 edition of the *New York Daily News* hit the streets. In a



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RON GALELLA

In 1988, above, before she reportedly went under the knife, Ivana had wrinkles around her eyes and a fleshier chin.

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front page story, columnist Liz Smith heralded, "Love On The Rocks," citing Donald's alleged roving eye as the reason. Later that day, Trump, in Tokyo for the Tyson-Douglas bout, tersely confirmed the split. Back in New York, Ivana stayed behind her gilded Trump Tower doors.

When Donald returned from Japan a day later, he went not to that 100-room penthouse but to temporary digs in the Grand Hyatt, which he also owns. By the next morning lawyers were lining up to do battle over the couple's prenuptial agreement. The lengthy document, updated as recently as December 1987, grants custody of their three children (Donald Jr., 12, Ivanka, 8, and Eric, 6) to Ivana, as well as possession of their 45-room, \$3.7 million Greenwich, Conn., home and a \$25 million settlement. "Twenty-five million?" scoffed one insider. "She can't even do her nails with that!" Indeed, Ivana's camp—calculating that this would represent only 1.5 percent of Trump's estimated \$1.7 billion—quickly made it clear that she wants more.

A deal's a deal, said Donald, responding to reports that Ivana will ask for the Plaza and an estimated \$150 million. "The prenuptial agreement is airtight," he stressed during a PEOPLE interview, though, as ever, he praised his wife effusively. "Ivana is a



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In Aspen over the Christmas holidays, Donald and Ivana reportedly shared the slopes with one blond too many.

good woman. But you grow apart. People understand that."

What Donald doesn't understand is why his divorce quickly crowded more significant world events off New York front pages. "I thought it would be a one-day wonder," Trump adds, "I know at first the sympathy goes to the woman, and it should. She's good people." He swears he'll treat her right. "It's gonna be amicable, I promise you that," says Donald. "Listen, we never

The new improved Ivana, above in December, complemented her new face and bust line with a softer hairstyle.

had a fight. The kids never saw anything wrong. And they're gonna be great. She's gonna be great." According to Liz Smith, Ivana isn't buying it. Smith's Valentine's Day column on the city's most openly wounded heart quotes Ivana as confiding to a friend, "I am afraid. I know the children and I will be Donald's next 'project.' I know how he is. He will simply zero in on us."

The Trumps' Christmas Vacation

By most accounts, the ailing marriage took its fatal downhill plunge during the couple's stormy Christmas holiday in Aspen, where they were seen arguing on the slopes and outside Bonnie's, a popular restaurant on the mountain. Another vacationing skier reports that on Dec. 29 Ivana became enraged when she learned that actress-model Marla Maples was also at the resort.

Two days later, according to one witness, when Maples, 26, walked out of Bonnie's, Ivana confronted her, demanding, "You bitch, leave my husband alone." Trump, who was sitting within earshot putting on his skis, took off down the mountain. Wrong move: Ivana is an excellent skier; Donald is not. When the formidable Czech pushed off in hot pursuit, fascinated observers swear they saw her whip in front of Donald and then ski backwards down the slopes, wagging her finger in his face.

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The Marla Maples Story

"He must be interested in some lady," insists Trump pal Mai Hallingby, wife of investment banker Paul, about the divorce.

"It must be something serious." That belief may be common in New York social circles, but some observers, pointing to Donald's rumored history of flirtations (more about them later), dismiss the notion that Marla is the cause of the Trumps' split. A bit-part actress (*Maximum Overdrive*, *The Secret of My Success*), Maples catapulted into the world of the rich and famous from Dalton, Ga. (the same "carpet capital of the world" that nurtured Deborah Norville). The daughter of Dalton real estate man Stanley Maples and his ex-wife, Ann Ogletree, who works part-time for an attorney, Marla

earned the title Miss Resaca Beach Poster Girl before posing for a Delta Airlines poster in 1984. Soon after, she landed in New York, where she studied acting with Alice Spivak. "She was very sweet, very blond, very Southern," recalls Spivak. "She needed to work on her acting." In the meantime, she took up modeling.

Marla, who has dated New York Giant punter Sean Landeta, got a career break when she was signed by the Ford agency. In July 1988 the *New York Post* ran a blind item linking her with "one of New York's biggest business tycoons, a married man." The same paper recently reported that "the shapely blonde... supposedly goes

Marla's résumé lists juggling and the trampoline as special skills.

Dynasty's Catherine Oxenberg, above, hangs out in the same gilded Aspen and Palm Beach haunts as the Trumps.

around to all the stores in Trump Tower saying, 'Charge it to Donald.' " Maples' manager, Chuck Jones, says, "Marla knows him indirectly. She's denying all the rumors. She is not the cause." But insiders note that during the past 18 months, the actress-model has frequently appeared, with a series of escorts (including Jones), at parties the Trumps tossed and attended.

Back home in Georgia, Marla's mother stood by her peach. "There's no truth to any of this," says Ogletree. "My daughter is a sweet, loving person. She and Mr. Trump are friends, and that's all. Mr. Trump has a lot of friends, and if he even *speaks* to a woman, everyone says he's having an affair."

The Donald as Don Juan

Mrs. Ogletree has a point. As old rumors surfaced and were printed in the wake of the divorce announcement, The Donald—as Ivana, in her deep-throated, engaging European accent, calls him—was linked with more women than even Julio Iglesias. Rumors of a dalliance with *Dynasty* beauty Catherine Oxenberg predated the Marla murmurs, and the whispers continue even now. Oxenberg denies them. "It's a complete joke as far as I'm con-

cerned," she says. "I hardly know the man." But a friend of Oxenberg's calls them pals, adding, "Occasionally they do stuff, but they're not sleeping together. Donald Trump is not a shabby escort."

Many others apparently agree. The often dour dealmaker has also been linked with Mike Tyson's ex, Robin Givens, who refused to comment, and model Carol Alt. "Donald Trump is a fortunate man, but he's not that fortunate," demurs Alt's manager, Steve Gutstein, who points out that Trump has been a guest of Alt and her husband, hockey player Ron Greschner, at New York Rangers games.

Another rumor that drew an icy response linked Trump with Olympic skating champ Peggy Fleming, whom he met in 1986 at the unveiling of Wollman Rink, the public Central Park rink that Trump restored at his own expense. "Their paths do cross when she's in New York doing work for ABC Sports," says Karen Conrad, Fleming's manager. "But basically she's a happily married person to Dr. Greg Jenkins."

Other happily married persons whose names were suddenly thrown together with Trump's include—stunningly—Ivana's frequent lunch mates, La Prairie cosmetics queen Georgette Mosbacher (wife of Sec-

Robin Givens, below, met Trump while she was married to heavyweight Mike Tyson and Trump was promoting him.



ANTHONY SAVIGIANO/GALELLA LTD.



Ivana's sister-in-law, Blaine Trump, above left, got chummy with Peggy Fleming at a benefit last year.

RANDY BAUER/GALELLA LTD.

retary of Commerce Robert) and designer Carolyne Roehm (wife of billionaire leveraged-buyout king Henry Kravis). "That's absurd," the thrice-married Georgette told PEOPLE. "I don't know what you're talking about." An equally adamant Carolyne Roehm told the *Washington Post*, "It's ridiculous. I'm married to the greatest man in the world."

The Donald himself, in an interview with PEOPLE, was contemptuous of the rumors. "I see the names of women I'm supposed to have slept with," Trump says. "They named two that I never met. Two others I shook hands with. Then they named Robin Givens. Can you imagine? At the time, she was married. Would I want *that* jealous husband [Mike Tyson] after me?"

All the rumors, though, are wearing on Ivana. "This is a horrendous thing for her," says her close friend Mr. [Richard] Blackwell, author of the yearly Worst-Dressed list. "I remember the time they bought their boat [the *Trump Princess*, purchased for \$29 million from Adnan Khashoggi in 1987]. Soon after,



BARRY TALESNICK/RETNA LTD.

she wanted to take me out to see it. I remember watching her call the dock and being told that Donald had already taken the boat out himself. She suddenly looked very sad. It was obvious what she was thinking... that she knew what that meant."

Ivana's Search for the Fountain of Youth

"Donald wants a 19-year-old," speculates a Palm Beach society watcher, and some say a similar belief inspired Ivana to undertake a recent transformation. After a highly unflattering photo of her appeared on the May 1989 cover of the cheeky *Spy* magazine, Ivana started keeping a very low profile. When she reappeared, that profile had changed. So had the cleavage. A Beverly Hills plastic surgeon had done a face-lift and a breast-lift, transforming the solid Ivana into what some took to be an aristocratic variation of Catherine

Oxenberg. "Ivana knew Donald was serious about Catherine," says a Manhattan socialite. "Copying Catherine's face was the last desperate move. But it didn't work." Even worse, another social titan confides, "Ever since she had surgery to look like Catherine, her face has felt uncomfortable. Like the nerve endings didn't connect or something awful."

Still, Ivana pushed on. Once somewhat pudgy, overly made-up and overly blond, Ivana is now the very model of a "social X-Ray"—the transparently thin Manhattan socialite Tom Wolfe immortalized in *Bonfire of the Vanities*. Though she has never fessed up to the touch-up, a slimmer Ivana has softened her hair color and hairdo, and she has emphasized, "If people can improve themselves, they should."

But Trump either didn't notice or didn't care. Asked by *Playboy* if his marriage was monogamous, Trump replied, "I don't have to answer that."

Model and frequent partygoer Carol Alt, left, starred in a Trump Shuttle commercial.

The pre-nup gives Ivana the waterfront Greenwich house.



JOE MCNALLY/STYMA

The Trumps rarely visited their Florida prize, Mar-A-Lago.



RAY FAIRALL/PHOTOREPORTERS

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Asked if he enjoyed flirtations, he said, "I think everybody likes knowing he's well responded to. Especially as you get into a certain strata where there is an ego involved and a high level of success."

The Ego Factor

Once upon a time, Donald needed Ivana. "Who ever heard of Donald Trump before he built that awful building and put his name on it?" sniffs a member of the Palm Beach Old Guard. "I think long ago he had a goal and wanted a certain kind of woman. He likes flash. She sets him off. You don't miss her in a crowd."

After a while, though, she may have crowded out Donald. "She wants the power too," observes one employee. For nearly three years she was CEO of Trump's Castle casino in Atlantic City, commuting back and forth by helicopter. In 1988, when Trump bought the venerable Plaza Hotel, he installed Ivana as president. Her frequently quoted salary: "\$1 a year—and all the dresses she can buy."

As time went on, she bought a lot of



Ivana encouraged her designer friends, including Carolayne Roehm, above, to show their collections at the Plaza.

dresses. She also made a lot of decisions. "Ivana came from this European tradition; she came to America, where the streets are supposed to be paved in gold," observes interior designer Mario Buatta, "and she worked hard to get that dream. She worked her ass off, and she was finally getting credit

for that work, and she gets slapped in the face like this. Donald Trump has a monster ego."

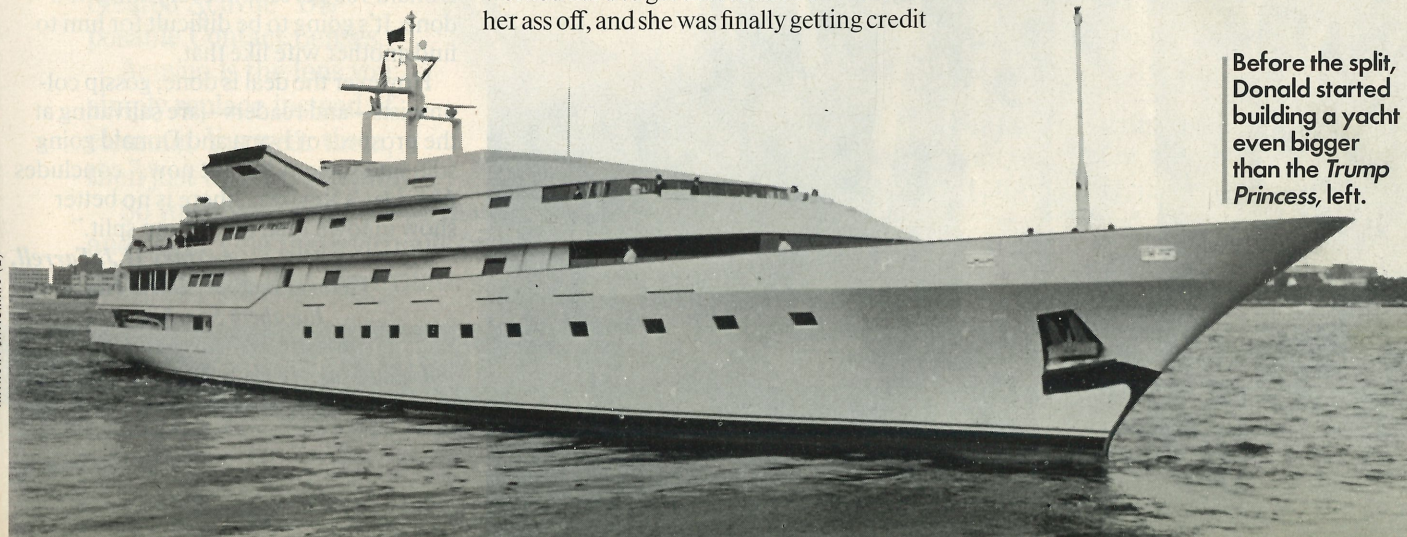
A veteran partygoer agrees: "Success is what really turned him against her. Donald is not doing anything for love. This is not about him having affairs. This is about two egos wearing away at each other. The more she worked at what she thought he'd like, the less he liked it."

In recent months, Trump, perhaps preparing for a property war, has downplayed Ivana's role in his empire. Last week he grumbled during a WWOR-TV news report that she had "gotten too arrogant with her power. I was afraid we would be creating another Leona Helmsley." And there was little doubt how Donald viewed Leona. "She is a vicious, horrible woman who systematically destroyed the Helmsley name," he told *Playboy*. "If Harry had one fault, it was giving her too much leeway."

Donald the Dull, Ivana the Martyr

If The Donald has one fault, it may be in underestimating Ivana's popularity. "There is enormous sympathy for her," says *Newsday's* Revson. "You couldn't

Before the split, Donald started building a yacht even bigger than the Trump Princess, left.



ANTHONY SAVIGLIANO (2)

measure with an eyedropper the sympathy for him in this town." Says highborn model Nina Griscom: "I don't know a lady in New York who doesn't like her." On Valentine's Day, dozens of them proved it by

showing up, bearing birthday hearts and testimonials, for a luncheon in Ivana's honor. "She is a decent, caring person and a marvelous mother," adds Blackwell. "Trump has just decided he's going to be a gay blade for awhile."

"He is a very cold man," the Palm Beach doyenne dismisses. "He figures everyone

in terms of how he can buy or sell them." That dogged pursuit of cash made him a folk hero—and helped make his 1987 book, *The Art of the Deal*, a best-seller.

The Art of Divorce

Like many men before him, though, Trump may find dissolving an emotional contract is more ordeal than deal. "I love my children and I will always love Ivana," he says. "Right now, our paths have gone in different directions, but I would never do anything to hurt her." Described by an intimate as "terribly confused," The Donald was even seen embracing his estranged wife two days after their headlined split.

But, business is business. Saddled with prenuptial and postnuptial contracts that she must now regret signing, Ivana has enlisted noted criminal lawyer Michael Kennedy, a close friend who has represented everyone from Jean Harris (during her request for retrial) to underworld figures. The Donald, meanwhile, has hired both divorce lawyer Stan Lotwin and criminal lawyer Jay Goldberg, who once represented Bess Myerson's contractor boyfriend, Andy Capasso.

Despite the public spectacle, many social observers believe the War of the Trumps will end peacefully. "No one will take care of his ex-wife and kids as well as Donald Trump," says his real estate buddy, Abe Hirschfeld. "The hard part was the kids," Trump stressed to PEOPLE. "They're so young. They didn't understand. I tried to explain. Ivana and I didn't fight, so they didn't see it coming." Nor, perhaps, did their mother: Ivana was reportedly looking forward to posing with Donald for Revlon's Unforgettable Women campaign. Abruptly, the Feb. 16 Richard Avedon shoot was canceled.

Still, some are betting this Unforgettable Couple will reconcile. "He's a fool," says Mai Hallingby. "Ivana has supported Donald 100 percent in everything he's done. It's going to be difficult for him to find another wife like that."

However the deal is done, gossip columnists—and readers—are salivating at the prospect of Ivana and Donald going solo into society. "Right now," concludes *Newsday's* Revson, "there is no better show in town than the Trump split."

—Mary H.J. Farrell,

Victoria Balfour, David Hutchings,

Elizabeth Sporkin, Ken Gross,

Kristin McMurrin in New York;

Linda Marx in Palm Beach; Vickie Bane in Aspen; Michael Mason in Atlanta

Days before the headlines, the Trumps glumly made their social rounds.



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