83. The Three Musketeers

The Three Musketeers, James Musk, Andrew Musk, and Ross Nordeen, played pivotal roles in the dramatic transformation of Twitter between October 26-30, 2022, amidst Elon Musk's acquisition of the platform. James, much like his cousin Elon in both appearance and intellectual capacity, became a leading figure in reshaping Twitter's technical infrastructure, gathering a team of engineers from Tesla and SpaceX to overhaul the platform. With a deep admiration for Elon from his youth, James stepped into the role with determination, displaying an unyielding commitment to Musk's vision for Twitter despite personal sacrifices, such as missing important family events, to ensure the success of the project.

The chapter delves into James's journey, from his early days as a young adventurer along the Riviera to his crucial involvement in Tesla's Autopilot team, which laid the foundation for his significant role in Twitter's transformation. Alongside him, his brother Andrew shared a similar path, both professionally and personally, further cementing the Musk family's influence in the tech world. Their partnership with Ross, a fellow tech enthusiast, strengthened the team's bond, with the three of them forming a powerful, yet controversial, group within the corporate world, and ultimately making them the "musketeers" of this corporate saga. Their shared vision and unrelenting ambition set the stage for the aggressive overhaul that Musk envisioned for Twitter, signaling the beginning of a transformative chapter in the platform's history.

As the musketeers took on the task of auditing Twitter's engineering team, they faced immediate challenges that tested their skills and resolve. The process of assessing the quality of the platform's code and deciding which staff members would remain to align with Elon Musk's ambitious restructuring plans proved to be a delicate and contentious endeavor. Musk's direct involvement in the decision-making process meant that there was no room for error, and their methodical approach, though effective, was often

perceived as harsh, especially when it came to trimming down the workforce. The tension between Musk's visionary zeal and the harsh realities of corporate restructuring underscored the complexity of attempting to transform a platform as massive as Twitter, where every decision carried significant weight.

Along the way, the musketeers interacted with key figures like Ben San Souci and Kayvon Beykpour, who were potential allies in Musk's vision for Twitter but also represented challenges to the plan. These interactions brought a new layer of strategy and doubt to Musk's plan, highlighting the inherent risks and difficulties of reimagining such a large-scale social platform. The story captures the dual nature of innovation and ruthlessness, as the team navigated the fine line between pushing for groundbreaking changes and dealing with the backlash from those resistant to such rapid and sweeping transformation. Through these complex dynamics, the narrative emphasizes the challenges Musk faced in trying to reshape Twitter to fit his singular vision, a task that was never going to be easy, but one that could define the future of social media.

This chapter provides a detailed portrait of the personal and professional stakes involved in Musk's quest to transform Twitter, painting a vivid picture of the ambition, sacrifice, and strategic risk-taking required to undertake such a monumental task. Through the eyes of the musketeers, we witness the unfolding of a pivotal moment in the tech industry, underscored by the Musk family's relentless drive to disrupt and innovate. The story highlights the immense complexity of reimagining a platform as influential as Twitter, a journey marked by Musk's characteristic blend of genius, controversy, and the challenges that come with implementing such drastic change in a deeply entrenched industry. The musketeers' dedication to their mission, despite the overwhelming obstacles, represents the very essence of ambition and vision, setting the stage for a new era in digital communications.