

# 11. Justine

In the 1990s, Palo Alto became a backdrop to the unfolding romance between Elon Musk and Justine Wilson. Their story, ripe with the ingredients of a classic romance drama, began at Queen's University. Musk, a sophomore, and Wilson, then using her birth name Jennifer and a freshman, shared a love for the intellectual - he in technology and she in dark fantasy novels. Their initial interaction was quaint yet telling of Musk's persistence; after being stood up for an ice cream date, he found Wilson with her favorite vanilla-chocolate-chip ice cream, a gesture that marked the beginning of their complex relationship.

Wilson, amidst ending a relationship with a seemingly cooler individual, was drawn to Musk's indomitable will and ambition, which wasn't tied to the pursuit of wealth but to solving significant problems. Despite a physical separation, with Musk moving to Penn and Wilson to Japan, their connection endured, rekindled by Musk's call from New York City. This led Wilson to leave for California, moving into Musk's Palo Alto apartment, a humble dwelling shared with housemates and a dachshund named Bowie.

Their relationship, described by Musk and Wilson themselves, thrived on drama and the challenge of intellectual and personal differences. Musk's proposal, reminiscent of a scene from the very romance novels Wilson aspired to write, was predictive of their tumultuous future together. Their love was characterized by fierce debates and disagreements, a mirror to the combative nature Musk exhibited in his professional pursuits. One notable argument in Paris over the interpretation of the Lady and the Unicorn tapestries epitomized their dynamic, highlighting Musk's tendency to fiercely defend his viewpoints.

As marriage loomed, concerns from Musk's close circle emerged, underscoring the apprehension about the union's stability. Despite these warnings and a prenuptial agreement causing an initial strain, their wedding proceeded in January 2000 on the Caribbean island of Saint Martin. This chapter of their lives, enveloped in the aspirational and the turbulent, captures Musk's early days through the lens of personal relationships, laying a foundation for his later endeavors.