

27. Talulah

In July 2008, amidst professional and personal turmoil, Elon Musk traveled to London to speak at the Royal Aeronautical Society. Following recent failures with SpaceX rockets and challenges within Tesla amid a brewing global economic crisis, Musk was also navigating a divorce. Despite these pressures, Musk delivered a speech championing commercial space exploration's innovation over governmental efforts and highlighting the significance of such ventures for planetary colonization. His visit also included a meeting with the CEO of Aston Martin, who expressed skepticism about electric vehicles and climate change concerns.

The following day, suffering from stress-induced stomach pains, Musk was taken to a clinic by his friend, Bill Lee. After being cleared of serious health concerns, Lee arranged for them to unwind at Whisky Mist, a popular nightclub. There, Musk and actress Talulah Riley were introduced by mutual friends. Riley, a rising actress known for her role in "Pride and Prejudice," was initially unaware of Musk's identity as the man behind the rockets he discussed. Musk's awkward yet earnest approach led to him asking for her phone number, marking the beginning of their connection.

Despite initial misgivings due to misinformation about Musk's marital status, Riley was reassured by friends that he was indeed single. Their swiftly developing relationship saw them spending a considerable amount of time together, enjoying multiple meals and even shopping for Musk's children. Riley's initial impression of Musk as shy and awkward shifted as she got to know him, laying the foundation for their future together. This encounter not only offered Musk a reprieve from his professional challenges but also signaled the start of a significant personal relationship with Riley.