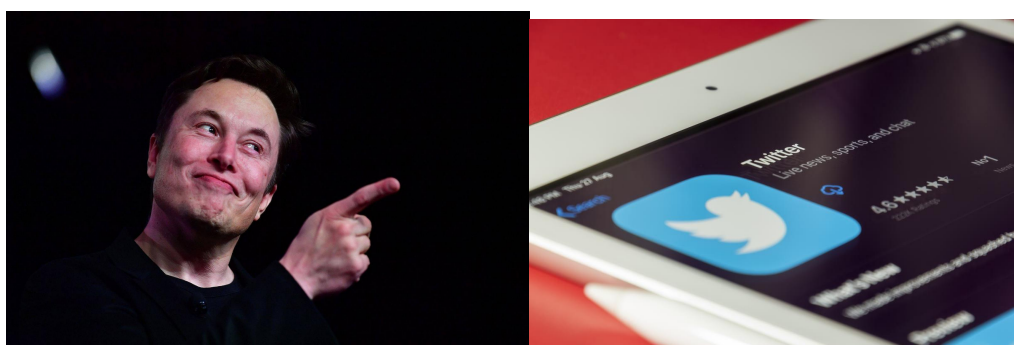


Star dreck¹

文章导读：4月14日，埃隆·马斯克突然提出以54.2美元的全现金交易收购推特，原因是他个人对该公司的不满，消息公布后，推特股价暴涨超20%。但因为收购的不确定性，当时推特的股价仍然低于54.20美元的拟议收购价。

此后，推特董事会宣布一项“毒丸计划”旨在抗拒马斯克的收购。“毒丸”是20世纪80年代创造的一种股东权利策略，目的是帮助公司保护自己免受敌意收购的影响。“毒丸”允许现有股东（潜在收购者除外）在潜在收购者达到一定的公司所有权门槛时以折扣价购买额外的股份。推特的毒丸计划将允许股东（除马斯克外）以210美元的行使价，为其持有的每一股普通股购买千分之一的推特优先股。每股优先股的价值将是行使价的两倍（420美元）



Elon Musk is showing what a waste of time Twitter can be

埃隆·马斯克（Elon Musk）正在展示推特是多么浪费时间

“Rub it out!” stormed Henry Ford when his sensitive son Edsels **summoned the courage**² to present him with a proposal to Modernise the Model T. It was 1924, and Edsel saw the threat posed by the stylish cars emerging from General Motors. General Motors, of course, would go on to become the world’s biggest carmaker and then the **acme**³ of sluggishness. To learn how to make better cars, it spent billions creating a new company, Saturn, and undertaking a joint venture with Toyota at a factory in Fremont, California. Both attempts to overcome **inertia**⁴ failed.

“擦掉它！”亨利·福特（Henry Ford）的敏感儿子埃德塞尔（Edsels）鼓起勇气向他提出了一项让T型车现代化的建议。当时是1924年，埃德塞尔看到了通用汽车（General Motors）推出的时尚汽车所带来的威胁。当然，通用汽车（General Motors）将继续成为世界最大的汽车制造商，然后成为低迷的顶点。为了学习如何制造更好的汽车，它花费了数十亿美元创建了一家新公司 Saturn，并与丰田在加利福尼亚州弗里蒙特的一家工厂建立了合资企业。两次克服惯性的尝试都失败了。

Yet now automakers not just in America but around the world are panting to transform the very nature of their vehicles. That is in no small part thanks to the company that paid

¹ **Dreck** [drek] n. <俚>废物；垃圾

² **summon the courage** 鼓起勇气

³ **acme** ['ækmi] n. 顶峰；顶点；典范

⁴ **inertia** [ɪ'nɜːrʃə r'fekt] 惯性效果

next to nothing for the idle plant in Fremont and started making electric cars there. **To the dismay of**⁵ a short-selling multitude, Tesla proved to be the first successful startup in the American car industry since Chrysler, which was founded in 1925.

然而，现在不仅是美国，全世界的汽车制造商都渴望改变汽车的本质。这在很大程度上要归功于这家公司，该公司几乎没有为弗里蒙特的闲置工厂支付任何费用，并开始在那里生产电动汽车。令卖空者失望的是，特斯拉被证明是自 1925 年成立的克莱斯勒以来，美国汽车行业第一家成功的初创企业。

Rapturous about internal combustion—they could veer toward poetry when discussing its roar and smell - American car executives used to **scoff**⁶ at electric vehicles. Their forays into the technology yielded **mediocrities**⁷ that they seemed to hope would disillusion the tree-huggers who bought them. By showing the electric car could be glamorous, Elon Musk changed the industry.

基于对于内燃机的愤怒，当他们讨论它的轰鸣声和气味时，他们可能会转向诗歌——美国汽车高管过去常常嘲笑电动汽车。他们对这项技术的尝试产生了平庸的批评，他们似乎希望这会让购买他们的护树者大失所望。通过展示电动汽车的魅力，埃隆·马斯克改变了这个行业。

Around that same time he was rejuvenating another **doddering**⁸ industry. Few experts thought SpaceX could succeed, either. They scorned the idea that anyone would entrust a satellite to a reusable rocket, a far cheaper option. Yet this year SpaceX, the low-cost ticket to orbit, is launching about a rocket a week. America is leading an industry it had all but ceded to Russia and is boldly planning ventures into the solar system once again.

大约在同一时间，他正在振兴另一个步履蹒跚的行业。几乎没有专家认为 SpaceX 能够成功。他们鄙视任何人都会将卫星委托给可重复使用的火箭，这是一种更便宜的选择。然而，今年太空探索技术公司（SpaceX）是一种低成本的轨道交通工具，每周发射大约一枚火箭。美国正在领导一个几乎被割让给俄罗斯的产业，并大胆地计划再次进军太阳能系统。

You will read some of the less appealing bits about Mr Musk shortly. It seemed worthwhile first to note a couple of his achievements—he also helped lead what became America’s largest installer of solar panels—because of the condescension and even hate bucketing upon him from America’s left-leaning press these days. Sam Bankman-Fried may have built his reputation as a visionary upon sand, but it is Mr Musk who has become the face of capitalist perfidy. Yet has any other business person (or, let’s face it, journalist) done as much to combat climate change? Or to save democracy in Ukraine, where Mr Musk’s Starlink satellite network has kept the government, citizens and soldiers online?

你很快就会读到关于马斯克的一些不那么吸引人的地方。首先值得注意的是，他还帮助领导了成为美国最大的太阳能电池板安装商的几项成就，因为近来美国左翼媒体对他的傲慢甚至仇恨。萨姆·班克曼·弗里德（Sam Bankman-Fried）可能是在沙子上建立起了他作为一

⁵ **To the dismay of** 令…沮丧

⁶ **Scoff at** 嘲笑

⁷ **mediocrities** [ˌmɪdiˈɒkrɪtɪz] n. 平庸；普通；平常；平庸之人；碌碌无为者 mediocrity 的复数

⁸ **Doddering** [ˈdɒːdəɪŋ] adj. (尤指因年迈) 衰弱而步履蹒跚的 v. “dodder” 的现在分词

个有远见的人的声誉，但马斯克先生已经成为了资本家的代言人。然而，是否有其他商业人士（或者，让我们面对现实，记者）在应对气候变化方面做了同样多的工作？还是为了拯救乌克兰的民主，马斯克先生的星链卫星网络让政府、公民和士兵保持在线？

The contempt for Mr Musk says something about the press and about Mr Musk, and a lot about Twitter. Twitter has never been among the most popular social networks, but since launching in 2006 it has been an efficient means for discovering links to important news and big ideas. Probably for that reason it has been disproportionately valued by those who traffic in such things, including politicians, politically minded celebrities and journalists.

对马斯克先生的蔑视表明了媒体和马斯克先生以及推特的很多事情。Twitter 从未是最受欢迎的社交网络之一，但自 2006 年推出以来，它一直是发现重要新闻和重大创意链接的有效手段。可能是出于这个原因，它受到了那些从事此类活动的人的不成比例的重视，包括政治家、有政治头脑的名人和记者。

Yet Twitter has also proved to be a lousy medium for discussing important news and big ideas. It **disdains**⁹ nuance, amplifies misstatement and rewards conflict, cruelty and trolling. These are reasons Twitter's most adept user was probably Donald Trump. (In "Confidence Man", Maggie Haberman reports that an aide compared the moment Mr Trump first pecked out his own Tweet, rather than dictating it, to the scene in "Jurassic Park" when dinosaurs discover they can open doors themselves.) Like Mr Trump, other politicians, celebrities and journalists discovered they could deploy Twitter best to market themselves, courting followers by applauding certain points of view and condemning others. As a result, within the chattering classes, Twitter has become a powerful enforcer of conformity.

然而，Twitter 也被证明是讨论重要新闻和重大想法的糟糕媒介。它蔑视细微差别，放大错误陈述，奖励冲突、残忍和诽谤。这就是推特最熟练的用户可能是唐纳德·特朗普的原因。

（在《自信男人》中，玛吉·哈伯曼（Maggie Haberman）报道称，一名助手将特朗普第一次发出自己的推特而不是口述的那一刻与《侏罗纪公园》中恐龙发现自己可以打开大门的场景进行了比较。）和特朗普一样，其他政客、名人和记者发现，他们可以最好地利用推特来推销自己，通过赞扬某些观点并谴责其他观点来讨好追随者。因此，在叽叽喳喳的阶层中，推特已经成为一个强有力的合规执行者。

When Mr Musk took over Twitter in late October, a kind of mass **hysteria**¹⁰ seized those obsessed with the platform. Though **bemoaning**¹¹ Twitter's toxicity has been a staple of its habitués for years, many became convinced it turned **venomous**¹² overnight. Then one evening in mid-November, the herd decided Twitter was about to collapse; many wrote **poignant**¹³ farewells, recalling the good times. As Twitter perversely endured, some **denizens**¹⁴ urged their "followers"—why does anyone embrace that label?—to flee to

⁹ **disdains** [dɪs'deɪnz] n. 鄙视；蔑视；鄙弃 v. 鄙视；蔑视；鄙弃；不屑（做某事）

¹⁰ **hysteria** [hɪ'striə] n. 歇斯底里；情绪狂暴不可抑止；大肆鼓吹；狂热夸张；大惊小怪；癔病

¹¹ **bemoaning** [br'moʊnɪŋ] v. 哀怨；悲叹 bemoan 的现在分词

¹² **venomous** ['venəməs] adj. 分泌毒液的；有毒的；恶毒的；恶意的；充满仇恨的

¹³ **poignant** ['pɔɪnjənt] adj. 令人感伤的，令人沉痛的；悲惨的，酸楚的

¹⁴ **Denizens** ['denɪzənz] n. (某地区的)居民，常客，动物，植物

other platforms, even as they kept tweeting. Mr Musk's decision to allow Mr Trump back onto the platform was the last straw for a few, though why Mr Trump was beyond the pale and Nicolás Maduro just fine was the kind of question Twitter had no time for.

当马斯克在 10 月下旬接管推特时，一种大规模的歇斯底里抓住了那些痴迷于该平台的人。尽管多年来，抱怨推特的毒性一直是它的习惯，但许多人都相信它一夜之间变得有毒。11 月中旬的一个晚上，一群人决定推特即将崩溃；许多人写下了辛酸的告别，回忆起美好的时光。随着 Twitter 反常地忍受，一些居民敦促他们的“追随者”——为什么有人会接受这个标签-即使他们不断地发推特，也能适应其他平台。马斯克允许特朗普重返平台的决定是少数人的最后一根稻草，尽管为什么特朗普会变得面目全非，而尼古拉斯·马杜罗（Nicolás Maduro）只是一句话，这是推特没有时间回答的问题。

No way to save humanity

没有办法拯救人类

The **grandiosity**¹⁵ and super ficiality make for classic Twitter. But it is less amusing that Mr Musk is exemplifying the foolishness. He is at risk of turning himself into a spokes model for everything shoddy and obnoxious about his product. There is a principled argument for giving Mr Trump another chance on Twitter, but Mr Musk did not make it. Instead he polled users. He has tweeted insults, sexist tropes and at least one conspiracy theory, and raised doubts even about his idea of free speech. He has delighted in trolling critics. That is understandable (just about everyone who is Twitter-famous does it), but it seems unwise for Twitter's owner to act like just another of its tribal warriors. As Twitter has done to others, it may take his point of view—libertarian, **contrarian**¹⁶—and make it harsher, more performative, much less interesting.

华丽和超级社交造就了经典的 Twitter。但马斯克先生是愚蠢的榜样，这就不那么有趣了。他面临着将自己变成代言人的风险，因为他的产品质量低劣，令人厌恶。在推特上给特朗普一次机会是有原则的，但马斯克没有成功，而是对用户进行了调查。他在推特上发表了侮辱、性别歧视的比喻和至少一种阴谋论，甚至对他的言论自由理念提出了质疑。他很喜欢抨击批评者。这是可以理解的（几乎每一个 Twitter 名人都会这么做），但 Twitter 的所有者像其他部落战士一样行事似乎是不明智的。正如推特对其他人所做的那样，它可能会采取他的自由意志主义、相反的观点，并使其变得更严厉、更具表演性、更不有趣。

Above all, Mr Musk is demonstrating what a frivolous distraction Twitter can be. “The point is to Maximise the probable lifespan of humanity,” he once told a biographer, Ashlee Vance, in explaining why he was devoted to turning humans into a multiplanetary species. It would be arrogant to bet against Mr Musk, but if civilisational transcendence is the ambition, Twitter seems like a crazier moon shot than SpaceX or Tesla ever was. Maybe he will turn Twitter into the constructive public square he envisions, making it a truthful resource and revitalising America's bloated, unreliable news industry. But, for now, Twitter seems like a waste of his time, even more than it is for everyone else.

最重要的是，马斯克正在展示推特是一种多么无聊的分散注意力的东西。“关键是要最大限

¹⁵ **grandiosity** n. 宏伟；辉煌；夸张

¹⁶ **Contrarian** [kən'treɪən] n. 叛逆的人；故意与众不同的人

度地延长人类的可能寿命，”他曾对传记作家阿什利·万斯（Ashlee Vance）解释为什么他致力于将人类变成多行星物种。打赌反对马斯克是傲慢的，但如果超越文明是野心，Twitter 似乎比 SpaceX 或特斯拉更疯狂。也许他会把推特变成他所设想的建设性公共广场，让它成为一种真实的资源，重振美国臃肿、不可靠的新闻业。但就目前而言，推特似乎是在浪费他的时间，甚至比其他人更浪费时间。