

## **The Profile: The woman taking us to Mars & the billion-dollar sex tape empire**

Remember a few months ago when GQ came out with [that beautiful profile](#) of Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson? And how this newsletter proudly endorsed him for president in 2020? (It’s mainly because I believe we should have a president whose triceps are described as such: “His triceps are like captive wild horses that have finally been set free.” #America)

Well, Kevin Hart wildly disagrees. Here’s what he had to say [in a Q&A with Fortune](#):

### **You’re working with Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson. Do you think he should run for President?**

*Uh. No. I think he should sit his ass down. We got work to do. We got Jumanji coming out. All this shit needs to stop. It needs to stop. He needs to put on his goddamn hat and get ready for his promo tour. It's a disaster.*

Thanks, Kev.

We’ve got everything but politics this week:

- [The woman taking us to Mars](#)
- [The missing Chinese billionaire](#)
- [The high school sweethearts paying it forward](#)
- [The company cleaning up the Internet](#) [\*HIGHLY RECOMMEND\*]
- [The billion-dollar sex tape empire](#)
- [The CEO who built a house of cards](#)

## **PEOPLE TO KNOW.**

**The woman taking us to Mars:** Gwynne Shotwell is in charge of figuring out how to get us to Mars. As a rocket scientist & the president of SpaceX, she works with Elon Musk on a daily basis. Bless her heart. She was employee #11, so she’s seen the triumphs, the disappointments, the rocket explosions. And from that, she’s learned 2 things: Don’t bet against Elon. And never question whether something is possible.

*“How does Shotwell relax? ‘I drink a lot of wine.’”* [[‘Meet Gwynne Shotwell, the Woman Who Could Take Us to Mars.’ Marie Claire](#)]

**The missing Chinese billionaire:** Ever wonder what it would be like to build a more successful, faster-growing company than Tencent and Alibaba? Chen Tianqiao did it. And then he suddenly disappeared from the public eye. In his first interview after years of silence, he describes how he and his company crumbled amid panic attacks, stress & exhaustion. It’s not so easy at the top.

*“Many people spend their whole life to climb a mountain. Maybe you can climb several mountains.”* [[‘The Mysterious Case of the Missing Internet Billionaire.’ Bloomberg](#)] (h/t to [@henocki](#) for this profile rec!)

**The high school sweethearts paying it forward:** Everyone knows LeBron James, the NBA superstar. But only the residents of Akron, Ohio know LeBron James, the local hero. Behind the scenes, LeBron & his wife Savannah have been working with low-income, at-risk students in their hometown. While Zuck and Bill Gates are focused on solving global problems, this power couple is working just as hard on the problems in their own backyard.

*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is ‘What are you doing for others?’”* [[‘How Savannah and Lebron James Are Changing Lives in Their Hometown.’ Vogue](#)]

## COMPANIES TO WATCH.

**The company cleaning up the Internet:** Instagram CEO Kevin Systrom thinks the Internet is just a cesspool of trolls & snake emojis (which like, he’s not wrong). SO. He’s trying to make Instagram a Disneyland-style utopia where we’re all complimentary of our friends’ horrible selfies. This story delves into the algorithms behind why you never see comments like, “Don’t close wait just wait OPEN them leg baby,” on Instagram ever. Decency or censorship?

*“To Systrom, it’s pretty simple: Freedom of speech does not mean the freedom to shitpost.”* [[‘Instagram’s Kevin Systrom Wants to Clean Up the Internet.’ Wired](#)]

**The billion-dollar sex tape empire:** The Kardashians are not just a brand, they’re an obsession. It’s a billion-dollar cult built on selfies, products, & tears. Did it start because of Kim’s sex tape? Sure. Did the drama with Paris Hilton have something to do with it? Maybe. But 10 years & 14 seasons later, it’s undeniable this family has branding & self-promotion down to a money-making science.

*“As time goes by, you see some of the most vulnerable moments. There was a deliberate intent to be vulnerable and capture that from the beginning.”* [[‘The Kardashian Decade: How a Sex Tape Led to a Billion-Dollar Brand.’ Hollywood Reporter](#)]

## THROWBACK.

**The CEO who built a house of cards:** Here’s an example of how *not* to run a company. In one of the most spectacular flameouts in recent years, Elizabeth Holmes’s blood testing company Theranos went from a \$9B Silicon Valley unicorn to a sad Silicon Valley unicorn. Here’s the biggest lesson you’ll learn from Holmes: Secrecy is not good for business.

*“It’s O.K. if you’ve got a smartphone app or a social network, and you go live with it before it’s ready; people aren’t going to die. But with medicine, it’s different. [[How Elizabeth Holmes’s House of Cards Came Tumbling Down.](#)’ Vanity Fair]*

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