Don't pack your space suit just yet, Operation Colonize Mars is still on hold. Despite claims made by SpaceX President and COO Gwynne Shotwell that "could one day be used to create much of the living space for that Martian colony," referring to the use of Elon Musk's side gig the Boring Company, there is still a lot to be determined if life on Mars can happen (Mack). The Boring Company, among Musk's many ventures, is another take on transforming the way in which we travel. Known otherwise as a tunnel digging company, the Boring Company is currently busy digging under Los Angeles, as a means to bring about "a new kind of underground high-speed transit system" (Mack). According to Forbes's contributor Matthew Francis, he expresses concerns that aside from the difficulty entering the planet safely, "Mars lacks Earth's thick atmosphere and magnetic fields, which means it can't protect us from as much dangerous radiation from the Sun." (Francis) With that in mind, Shotwell believes their company can avoid radiation exposure simply by digging tunnels and allowing for inhabitants to live underground. Even with the slightest of good news that storms from the Sun don't seem to pose as a potential risk, the notion that Sun storms pack a punch still doesn't dismiss the risk factor in its entirety. Additionally, storms wouldn't be your only concern. The Sun and other galactic sources produce "a steadier rain of particles, which means constant exposure to low levels of radiation beyond what we normally experience on Earth." (Francis) That doesn't count standing next to the microwave every night waiting for your TV dinner to thaw. Basically, there is still much to uncover before we can start issuing Martian passports. We still need to understand the long-term effects of radiation exposure along with other risks posed upon Mars. Perhaps in the near future, we will unveil some technology that will counteract these risks but until then it is wise to understand all possible threats before taking up residence on the Red Planet.

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