These verses describe four situations so disturbing that “the earth is disquieted.” The first of these is a “servant when he reigneth.” A servant suddenly elevated to power—without the necessary training or guidance—will certainly create havoc. Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem about it which includes these lines: *His feet are swift to tumult, / His hands are slow to toil, / His ears are deaf to reason, / His lips are loud in broil. / He knows no use for power / Except to show his might. /He gives no heed to judgment / Unless it prove him right.* Similarly problematic is “a fool when he is filled with meat.” Dainties given to a fool are never of benefit to him or anybody else. Consider many of the unfortunates who have won money in a lottery! (Lottery winners are three to five times more likely to declare bankruptcy than other Americans.) The third category is “an odious woman when she is married.” This is a bitter spinster who finally gets married and then takes her spite out on those who previously ridiculed her. The “handmaid that is heir to her mistress” has the same problem as the servant who becomes king. Lacking the right training, she will only understand the rights and not the obligations of her new position. These are all examples of people elevated to positions which they cannot be fit to hold. It’s very human to seek after a superior position. And for some types of job we can get the training that will make us suitable to hold that job. But there are many positions in life which are fixed. We hold the role of mother, father, son, daughter, grandpa, aunt, etc. for life. As Christians we also hold roles as servants, as examples, as “peculiar people,” as fellow-sufferers with Christ, and as workers in the Gospel commission. Some are called to be martyrs. We can’t choose an easier role (with better rewards, more recognition, and less work). We must humbly do our best in those roles which rightly belong to us!

**Proverbs 30:21-23**

**For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear:**

**For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;**

**For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.**

**The Stone Marten**

The stone marten is an omnivorous mammal that lives throughout much of Europe and Central Asia. They’re about 15-23 inches in length, and very territorial. They eat almost anything, including fruit and eggs, as well as insects, small rodents, and birds. And they’re moving into town in ever increasing numbers. Town living is appealing because there’s plenty for an omnivorous scavenger to eat among the human leftovers. It’s an easy life! Between the garbage itself and the rodents attracted to it, there’s a constant buffet for a stone marten. And there are plenty of convenient shelters too, in sheds and garages and sewers and drains. But it turns out that the cars create a problem. Specifically, cars move. And the stone marten that owns the territory of your house doesn’t have an agreement with the stone marten that owns the neighborhood of your work. Stone martens, being strongly territorial, scent-mark their stuff, including any vehicles. When those vehicles, bearing a foreign marker, drive into another stone marten’s territory they are fair game. Stone martens bite and tear any soft bits—like the ignition cable, brake and power lines—in the car’s engine compartment. They may also chew on vehicles’ workings when nesting, or when they’re looking for a warm spot to rest. Collectively, stone martens cause some $330 million in vehicle damage *just in Germany* per year. They start car fires and cause accidents by taking out brake lines. Stone martens have taken down the CERN supercollider—twice. They’re widely considered a pest, and it’s pretty easy to see why! They’ve become city-dwellers, and cities just aren’t built for stone martens. They’re in the wrong place. And though the human cost is vast, it isn’t great news for the stone martens either: they’re trapped, poisoned, transported against their will, and their territories are constantly challenged by phantom stone marten neighbors scent-marking their cars! They’re out of place, because they thought city living would be easier, with its abundant food and shelter. They would have been better off taking Proverbs’ advice about keeping your place!

Amazon Prime

Nature: Natural Born Rebels

Season 1

Episode 2: “Survival”

Start: 9:59 (42:40 from End)

End: 16:59 (35:40 from End)