

Three Sonnets from Spenser's *Amoretti and Epithalamion* -

Sonnet 58

By her that is most assured to her selfe.

Weake is th'assurance that weake flesh reposes
In her own powre, and scorneth others ayde;
That soonest fals, when as she most supposes
Her selfe assur'd, and is of nought affrayd,
All flesh is frayle, and all her strength unstayd,
Like a vaine bubble blownen up with ayre:
Devouring tyme and changeful chance have prayd*
Her glorious pride, that none may it repayre.
Ne none so rich or wise, so strong or fayre,
But fayleth, trusting on his owne assurance:
And he that standeth on the hyghest stayre
Fals lowest; for on earth nought hath endurance.
Why then doe ye, proud fayre, misdeeme so farre,
That to your selfe ye most assured arre!

Sonnet 59

Thrice happy she that is so well assured
Unto herself and settled so in heart
That neither will for better be allured
Ne fears to worse with any chance to start,
But like a steddy ship doth strongly part
The raging waves and keeps her course aright;
Ne aught for tempest doth from it depart,
Ne aught for fairer weather's false delight.
Such self-assurance need not fear the spight
Of grudging foes; ne favour seek of friends;
But in the stay of her own stedfast might
Neither to one herself nor other bends.
Most happy she that most assured doth rest,
But he most happy who such one loves best.

Sonnet 73

Being my self captived here in care,
My hart, (whom none with servile bands can tye,
But the fayre tresses of your golden hayre,)
Breaking his prison, forth to you doth fly.
Like as a byrd, that in ones hand doth spy
Desired food, to it doth make his flight,
Even so my hart, that wont on your fayre eye
To feed his fill, flyes backe unto your sight.
Doe you him take, and in your bosome bright
Gently encage, that he may be your thrall:
Perhaps he there may learne, with rare delight,
To sing your name and prayses over all:
That it hereafter may you not repent,
Him lodging in your bosome to have lent.