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This heart that flutters near my heart
My hope and all my riches is,
Unhappy when we draw apart
And happy between kiss and kiss;
My hope and all my riches – yes! –
And all my happiness.

For there, as in some mossy nest
The wrens will divers treasures keep,
I laid those treasures I possessed
Ere that mine eyes had learned to weep.
Shall we not be as wise as they
Though love live but a day?

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Notes

This was No. 23 in the 1907 edition.

The fluttering heart of the wren recalls the bird-girl of Stephen's desire.

Compare with Shelley's 'To a Sky-Lark' as a poetical engagement with a bird. Tindall describes 'kiss' and 'is' as a false rhyme, and says that 'Joyce used assonance, dissonance, or approximate rhyme to suggest dissatisfaction, discord, or incompleteness' (208).

The deliberate archaism 'mine eyes' is an echo of 'Unquiet Thoughts', the opening song from Dowland's *First Book of Songs*.

The final line acknowledges that love is a process, a cycle, comparable to the progress of a day. The Lover offers a compensatory note in the face of this: love is still strong – hope, riches and happiness are still attainable. But wisdom is contrasted with weeping; and having passed 'noon' the only way is towards evening and the loss of light.