

Oh, liv - ing I! Come, tell me why, When

*p*

hope is gone, Dost thou stay on? — Why lin-ger here, Where

all is drear? Oh, liv - ing I! Come, tell me —

*cresc.*

*tremolo*

*cresc.*

why, When hope is gone, Dost thou stay on? May not a cheat-ed maid-en

*f*

die? May not a cheat-ed maid-en die?

*dim.*

Ko: *st* (entering and approaching her timidly) ~~Katisha!~~ *Katy Shaw*

Kat: The miscreant who robbed me of my love! But vengeance pursues—they are heating the cauldron!

Ko: ~~Katisha~~ *Katy dear*— behold a suppliant at your feet! ~~Katisha~~ mercy!

Kat: Mercy? Had you mercy on him? See here, you! You have slain my love. He did not love me, but he would have loved me in time. I am an acquired taste— only the educated palate can appreciate me. I was educating his palate when he left me. Well, he is dead, and where shall I find another? It takes years to train a man to love me. ~~Am I to go through the weary round again, and, at the same time, implore mercy for you who robbed me of my prey— I mean my pupil— just as his education was on the point of completion? Oh, where shall I find another?~~

Ko: (suddenly, and with great vehemence) Here!— Here!

Kat: What!!!

Ko: *Katy Shaw* (with intense passion) ~~Katisha~~, for years I have loved you with a white-hot passion that is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals! Ah, shrink not from me! If there is aught of woman's mercy in your heart, turn not away from a love-sick suppliant whose every fibre thrills at your tiniest touch! True it is that, under a poor mask of disgust, I have endeavoured to conceal a passion whose inner fires are broiling the soul within me. But the fire will not be smothered— it defies all attempts at extinction, and, breaking forth, all the more eagerly for its long restraint, it declares itself in words that will not be weighed—that cannot be schooled—that should not be too severely criticised. Katisha, I dare not hope for your love— but I will not live without it! Darling!

Kat: You, whose hands still reek with the blood of my betrothed, dare to address words of passion to the woman you have so foully wronged!

Ko: I do— accept my love, or I perish on the spot!

Kat: Go to! Who knows so well as I that no one ever yet died of a broken heart!

Ko: You know not what you say. Listen!