

Stone

THE stone walls of my cell
Kiss me,
And their kiss is cold
Like stone.
You kissed me too;
That was long ago,
And I imagined your kisses
Were warm with love,
But they were not, they were
Like stone.
Cold, Tombstone,
For my cell is a tomb,
Where for a hundred years and more
Men buried their agonies, lost their love
And suffered.
Tears and curses and rasping hate
And sleepless nights
Of men and boys and neither
Are stored in the dumb hideousness
Of the cold stone.
Here one raved with madness
Glared with the icy stare;
Another foolish, prayed to God,
Who heard him not,
And one did smoke and chew and spit,
And laugh and sing
At the joke he was in.
The cold stone knows it all but is silent
Because it is stone.

Ben Gitlow.

Sing Sing Prison.