When she fell, she fell apart. Cracked her bones on the pavement she once decorated as a child with sidewalk chalk When she crashed, her clothes disintegrated and blew away with the winds that took all of her fair-weather friends When she looked around, her skin was spattered with ink forming the words of a thousand voices Echoes she heard even in her sleep: "Whatever you say, it is not right." "Whatever you do, it is not enough." "Your kindness is fake." "Your pain is manipulative." When she lay there on the ground, She dreamed of time machines and revenge and a love that was really something, Not just the idea of something. When she finally rose, she rose slowly Avoiding old haunts and sidestepping shiny pennies Wary of phone calls and promises, Charmers, dandies and get-love-quick-schemes When she stood, she stood with a desolate knowingness Waded out into the dark, wild ocean up to her neck Bathed in her brokenness Said a prayer of gratitude for each chink in the armor she never knew she needed Standing broad-shouldered next to her was a love that was really something, not just the idea of something.|When she turned to go home, She heard the echoes of new words "May your heart remain breakable But never by the same hand twice" And even louder: "without your past, you could never have arrived- so wondrously and brutally, By design or some violent, exquisite happenstance ...here." And in the death of her reputation, She felt truly alive.