What If I Were Dirt?
Jonathan Garrison

I'd memorize your steps, Madeline,
to be retraced if you found yourself lost,
catch you if you stumbled, stain your jeans, cling
to the skin beneath your nails as you
planted sweet birch saplings, frail. I'd hide
in the corner beyond your broom's reach,
carried on an April breeze, beneath
your eyelids I'd slide – be a fleeting
malaise. During a summer's rain, I'd swallow
your Birkenstocks – be washed from your body with
sunflower-scented soap. I'd be the patches
of Mother Nature's field and forest
quilt for your eyes to fancy as you glide
high above to visit your mother on the Pacific
Coast. Swept seaward, I'd shape valleys, deep –
compact, amass, build mountains, high. As you set
your sails toward cities, unseen,
I'd wait for you across the sea.