

On a Count of the Stars

by Gary Hardaway

The stars aren't numberless
though we like to think they are.
The number is very large
and perpetually changes

as old stars fade, explode,
or collapse into something not stars
and new stars ignite
among the dust clouds far off.

And the grains of sand, too, are numbered.
As with stars, the number's very large
and won't sit still as old stones
go to new grains and old grains to new mortar

which is also lime which once was little
creatures in the sea so numerous that,
to a man, had there been a man,
they, too, would surely have seemed numberless.

