

# 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.

