[3:10 a.m. in bed]

Simon: I'm still awake.

Mergel: That makes two of us. Whenever you're awake, your imagination keeps me up.

Simon: Too much is going on. My mind won't stop.

Mergel: Yeah, I'm watching all the clutter zoom by. It makes me dizzy.

Simon: Why don't we try counting sheep?

Mergel: There are six of them.

Simon: No, that's not the idea. You don't start with a final answer, you just keep counting them.

Mergel: I did. That's how many there are. There aren't any more here. How many sheep did you think would fit in the bedroom, anyway?

Simon: Merg, the point is that counting sheep is boring. So you just imagine the sheep, and if you keep on counting, you'll get bored and fall asleep.

Mergel: How do you know the sheep are boring? Have you ever talked with them? They make tasty lamb chops, and that's not boring. If they're imaginary sheep, they're probably real interesting.

Simon: That defeats the purpose. If your sheep are interesting, then we have to count something else, so our minds get bored and tired.

Mergel: Why don't we just count lawyers, or read one of Ginny's legal documents?

Simon: That might work, but we'd have to turn the light on.

Mergel: If we leave the light off, the sheep might bump into something.

Simon: Why don't *you* walk past the foot of the bed, so I can see the top of your hat go by, and I'll count "1." Then you turn around and walk back in the other direction, and I'll count "2," and you can just keep walking until I fall asleep.

Mergel: Yeah, sure! You go right ahead, and start imagining me walking back and forth; I'm staying in bed. It's too cold outside the covers.

Simon: But once I fall asleep, you can crawl back in.

Mergel: How will you see me with the light out?

Simon: Merg, you're in my imagination – I'll see you the normal way! Go on, try it for a little while.

Mergel: And then, afterwards, will *you* walk back and forth for me, since I can't fall asleep?

Simon: I can't imagine how that would work! Please, just start walking.

Mergel: OK, here I come for number "1". …

Simon: Well, go ahead, start walking …

Mergel: I am! I'm just walking *real* slow, like in slow motion. I figure it would be more boring that way.

Simon: Merg, you're not boring, just frustrating. This isn't working.

Mergel: OK, now it's your turn … Start boring me. That should be easy for you.

Simon: We need to find some other way.

Mergel: Why don't we just go into the kitchen and cook the six lamb chops?

Simon: It's the middle of the night, and I'm not hungry, and besides, they're not real lamb chops; they're imaginary sheep. And now you've really woke me up!

Mergel: Me? I didn't do anything! I don't know how anyone could expect to sleep, with a flock of sheep marching through his bedroom. You're not much of a shepherd.

Simon: If we ever write this up, no one will ever believe us.

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 If you're worried and you can't sleep
Just count your blessings instead of sheep.
        -- Irving Berlin

Yeah, it's a lot safer.
        -- Mergel Funsky