

# Pictures of False Hope

*by* Jerry Ratch

We were busy painting pictures of False Hope  
on the face of Reality.  
Tattoos really.  
But they faded with time.  
And I now know this:  
Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

I saw an older writer in a slouched-down Fedora,  
gray beard and long scraggly gray ponytail,  
who had empty chairs pulled up all around him,  
at the Loser Café,

maybe for his imaginary friends,  
or maybe those who were already gone.  
Still writing,  
but maybe only for them now.

