

The New Criterion

Poems

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Meeting a friend again after thirty years

by [X.J. Kennedy](#)

Take off that mask. I know it's you.
Those wrinkles, sunken chin,
And goggled eyes can't quite disguise
Your wry familiar grin.

This is our mutual Halloween.
As though we mean to scare,
We face each other through a screen
Of fake teeth, whitened hair.

X.J. Kennedy is **X. J. Kennedy's** new and selected poems were published in Spring 2007 by Johns Hopkins.

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