

Remove

If I were to zoom in on Carlotta,
whom I have seen skin nor hair of in five years,

at five-thirty a.m. across earth,
in Barcelona, the living, breathing Carlotta,

and were to see her in the flesh, the pale,
soft white skin of the back of her arm,

smell her sleeping breath and smoke,
see her hand cupped on the pillow,

see how she had aged, I would feel
the tenderness of the brooding albatross

with his chick. Instead, though there she is,
in Barcelona, this very moment,

rising to open her tiny apartment's window
to the ringing clang of the propane merchant

as the water heats for espresso
and she pats around on bare feet

looking for her lighter,
though we both live here on earth

at the very same time,
a startling rarity on the geological scale,

she remains an abstraction, this human being
whose face I used to caress with my hand:

flashes of pain, joy,
altered memory.