

Wednesday, March 3

From **Bluets**

104. I do not feel my friend's pain, but when I unintentionally cause her pain I wince as if I hurt somewhere, and I do. Often in exhaustion I lay my head down in her wheelchair and tell her how much I love her, that I'm sorry she's in so much pain, pain I can witness and imagine but that I do not know. She says, if anyone knows this pain besides me, it is you, (and J, her lover). This is generous, for to be close to her pain has always felt like a privilege to me, even though pain could be defined as that which we typically aim to avoid. Perhaps this is because she remains so generous within hers, and because she has never held any hierarchy of grief, either before her accident or after, which seems to me nothing less than a form of enlightenment.

Maggie Nelson