

"Torso," by Henri Cole (1993)

Propped up in bed, my narrow waist a pedestal,  
I cannot think who or where I am, until  
a couple, pausing in the corridor, embrace,  
their pink mouths calling to mind the face  
on the night table of my former self behind glass.  
My temperatures chart a perilous graph,  
alas, those who visit seldom touch me.  
I am the white embroidered glove longing to be  
tugged upon a cadet's hand. "Let me die!"  
I implore, but each night the village clocks, dry-eyed,  
force me to live another day. Like gods,  
they are jealous of one another. As if a marauding  
heart is all I am, or was, and the pink dot  
on the monitor a marker for the one I sought.



Nicholas Nixon, *Tom Moran*, Boston, Mass., 1988 (gelatin-silver print)