

Artist's Statement**Title of Graphic Medicine:** It's Dark in Here**Author, illustrator:** J. Kilinski

During my time as an ultrasound technologist in perinatology, which involves high-risk pregnancies, I felt like my emotions needed to be bottled up inside – I felt that the patients were the ones going through the experience, not me. And while the patients are going through a very different experience on a very different level, I have since realized that my experience was also worth feeling. My time spent in the Narrative Competence course at OHSU over the last several weeks has helped me recognize that there are common threads connecting other providers with these experiences and common threads connecting our experiences with those of our patients.

This project was inspired by the Graphic Medicine books *Everything is OK* by Debbie Tung (2022) and *Taking Turns: Stories from HIV/AIDS Care Unit 371* by MK Czerwiec (2021). In *Everything is OK*, Tung brought emotions to life on the page with the illustrations and the thoughts going through the main character's head (2022); this inspired me to be raw and true to my own emotions on the pages of my Graphic Medicine. In *Taking Turns: Stories from HIV/AIDS Care Unit 371*, Czerwiec showed me that our stories, experiences, and feelings as caregivers are worthy of telling (2021). In my own short Graphic Medicine, I have highlighted just a few of the many stories that I think of often. Not all my stories from my time in perinatology are sad, but these are all sad stories because I wanted to allow myself to express that emotion as a caregiver.

References

Czerwiec, M. (MaryKay). (2021). *Taking turns : stories from HIV/AIDS care Unit 371*. Graphic Mundi. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781637790182>

Tung, D. (2022). *Everything is ok*. Andrews McMeel Publishing.