Graphic medicine is the use of comics to tell stories of illness and health.

Author and artist Cece Bell tells a charming and powerful story of her childhood hearing loss. Here we see how she imagines herself as a classroom hero—with her hearing device strapped to her chest.

From *El Deafo*  
Cece Bell, 2014

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Front Cover from *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me*  
Ellen Forney, 2012  
Courtesy Ellen Forney

The National Library of Medicine produced this exhibition.  
Guest curator: Ellen Forney  
Designer: HealyKohler Design
Graphic medicine communicates the author’s experience of illness and health and the art work adds subjective, emotional impact.

For other patients who share that health issue, it’s a way to have company and share information.

Comics combine the explicit meaning of words and symbols with the abstract expressiveness of art to create the unique, multi-layered language of comics.

From Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me
Ellen Forney, 2012
Courtesy Ellen Forney

From "The Myth of the Strong Black Woman"
The Nib, Whitney Taylor, March 8, 2015
Courtesy Whitney Taylor

From The Bad Doctor: The Troubled Life and Times of Dr. Iwan James
Ian Williams, 2015
Courtesy Whitney Taylor

But what about the issue we do not talk about enough: How the reality of being a black woman in America can wear away at even the most privileged of us?

A few months ago, amid struggling with my own anxiety, I learned of three well-known black women who died by suicide in the past year.

Cancer Vixen
Marisa Acocella Marchetto, 2006
Courtesy Marisa Acocella Marchetto and Penguin Random House LLC

Mom’s Cancer
Brian Fies, 2006
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