

Title: *A Good Kind of Trouble*

Author: Lisa Moore Ramée

Review by: Angelena Browne

This story is about a girl named Shayla attending Emerson Junior High. Shayla is a pretty anxious person who wants to follow the rules and has this weird trait where her hands itch every time she's in an uncomfortable situation. So this is something she goes through a lot especially this year when she has to deal with boy problems, unsteady friendships, and changes in her life. Even though things are difficult and hard to understand in seventh grade she learns more about identity. Shayla thinks that everything will be okay as long as she has her two friends by her side, Julia and Isabella, but realizes that there are things she has to figure out for herself like getting over insecurities, crushes on boys, and understanding what being black really means. This process is very difficult because she let's her insecurities get in the way. She hates when Julia has other friends that she likes hanging out with or that Isabella is so beautiful and Shayla's crush likes Isabella better. When she lets all this get to her head she avoids them and runs to her family and they take her to her first Black Lives Matter protest after the shooting of another unarmed black man. After the protest Shayla realizes the importance of her black identity and what that means to her life. This encourages to do something she would have never done before. She wears a black armband in protest of the shooting. The principal declares the armbands against the dress code, but Shayla wants to stand up for herself and does something big. She makes armbands for the whole school and hands them out to the whole school even though it could get her in trouble. It helps her learn to stick up for herself and stand up for what she believes in.

I really enjoyed this book because it shows the difficult process of figuring out your identity as a kid in middle school. It is hard to deal with the heightened violence and political climate we are exposed to today and this story shows an amazing way how we as young people can deal with it and be a part of the change. I really related to this story because we all go through those times where we have to try and understand relationships with friends, family, and our cultures. Shayla has to learn to not let crushes

and jealousy ruin relationships because she finds that feelings can be overwhelming. Keeping her friendships are more worth it than anything and taking the time to understand your identity within your race/culture is an important part of life whether you be black, white, Asian, or Latin, etc. Being in touch with that part of yourself is worth everything.