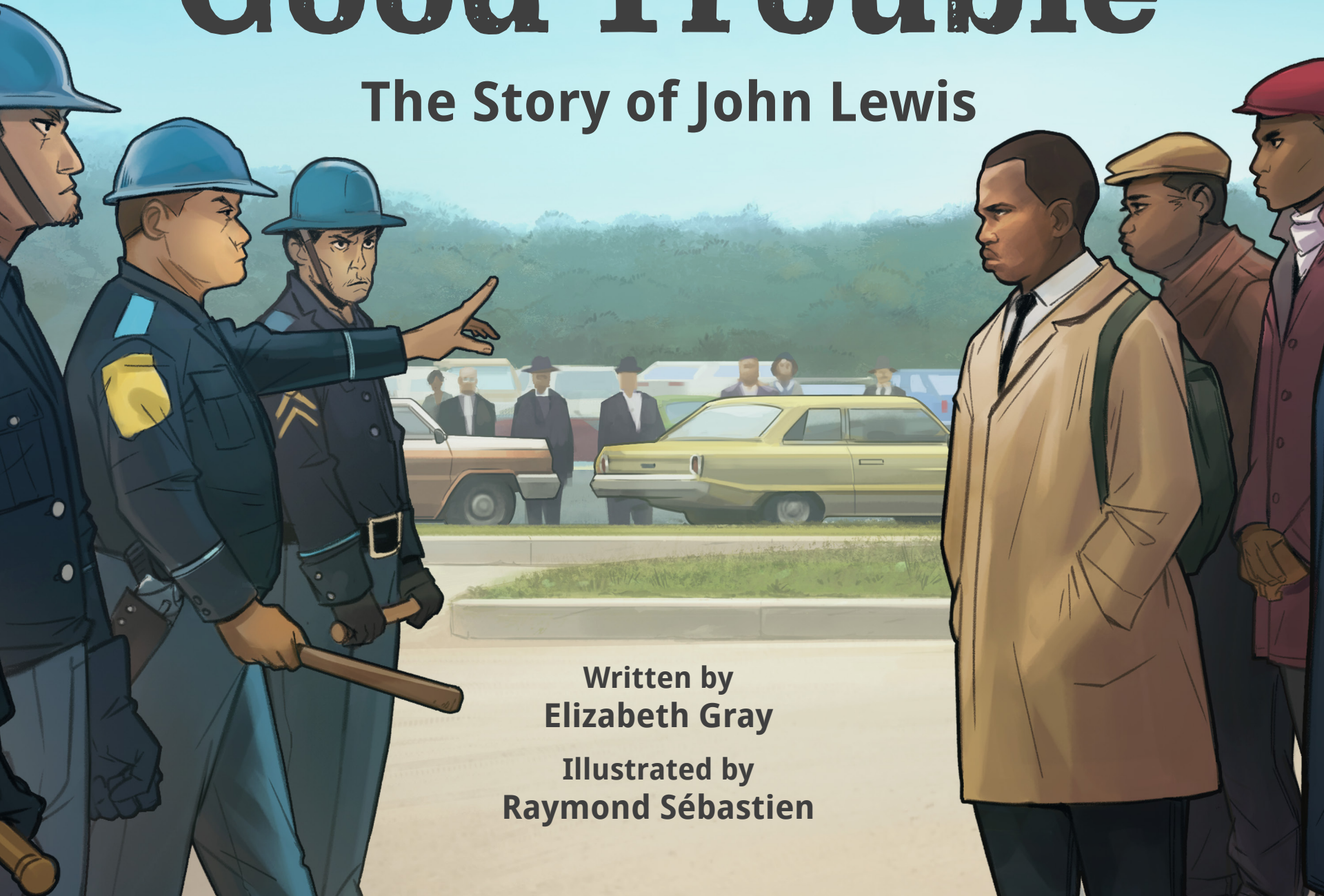


Good Trouble

The Story of John Lewis



Written by
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Illustrated by
Raymond Sébastien

1945

When John's family went into town, he read signs all around.

He asked questions too. Those questions were answered in hushes and shushes.

Sometimes through looks, sometimes through sounds, sometimes through upset faces around.

"Don't get in trouble. It's just the way it is," John was told.



1955

John didn't want trouble. He wanted answers.

He didn't want trouble. He wanted change.

He didn't want trouble. He wanted fairness.

The laws in place put his hopes on the other side of trouble.

John wasn't afraid to cross that line to get there.



1957

John quickly wrote to his hero, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

John knew that Dr. King also wanted better for all people.

“I need your help,” John wrote.

Through the radio, John always felt a connection to Dr. King.

His words spoke to John’s heart.

His words spoke to John’s conscience,

the sense of what is right or wrong.

When signs said *White Only*, John knew this just wasn’t right.

When his family told him not to question the laws,

he knew it wasn’t right.

John’s conscience was like a little light on the inside.





1958–1963

Dr. King taught John how to use his rights to fight for what was right!

As a young man, John used his right to protest. John used his freedom of speech.

He found peaceful ways to say, “Please listen to me!”

If something was not right, John found a way to get in the way.

He called this good trouble.

AUGUST 28, 1963

John Lewis stood before a sea of people.

He knew people in power would hear his words.

He wanted to challenge them to change unfair laws.

“We want our freedom, and we want it now.

We do not want to go to jail.

But we will go to jail if this is the price we must pay for love,
brotherhood, and true peace.”

John spoke with power and peace.

He hoped his words would light a fire in the hearts of others.



An illustration depicting a scene from the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches. On the left, three police officers in blue uniforms and helmets are shown. The officer in the middle is pointing his right index finger towards the marchers. He holds a wooden baton in his left hand. On the right, a line of African American men, the marchers, are standing. They are dressed in coats and hats, looking towards the police. The background is a light blue sky and a blurred street scene with a yellow car.

MARCH 7, 1965

One day John led a peaceful march for voting rights.

The people marched with peace on their minds.

They marched with hope in their hearts.

The officers in front gave John the same look people in town did when he was younger.

“Turn around!” yelled an officer.

John and his allies stopped to pray.

They were met with anger and hate.

They were harmed and taken to jail!

This did not stop John.

He knew that he wasn't wrong.

The laws were wrong!

John was willing to risk his life to make things right.

He called this necessary trouble to change people's lives.

1971

John became the leader of the Voter Education Project.

His job changed, but his goal was the same.

He knew voting was a powerful tool.

John and his team helped millions of people sign up to vote.

He continued to find ways to give people hope.



1981

John became someone people could vote for to represent their beliefs.
He became a councilman in Atlanta, Georgia.

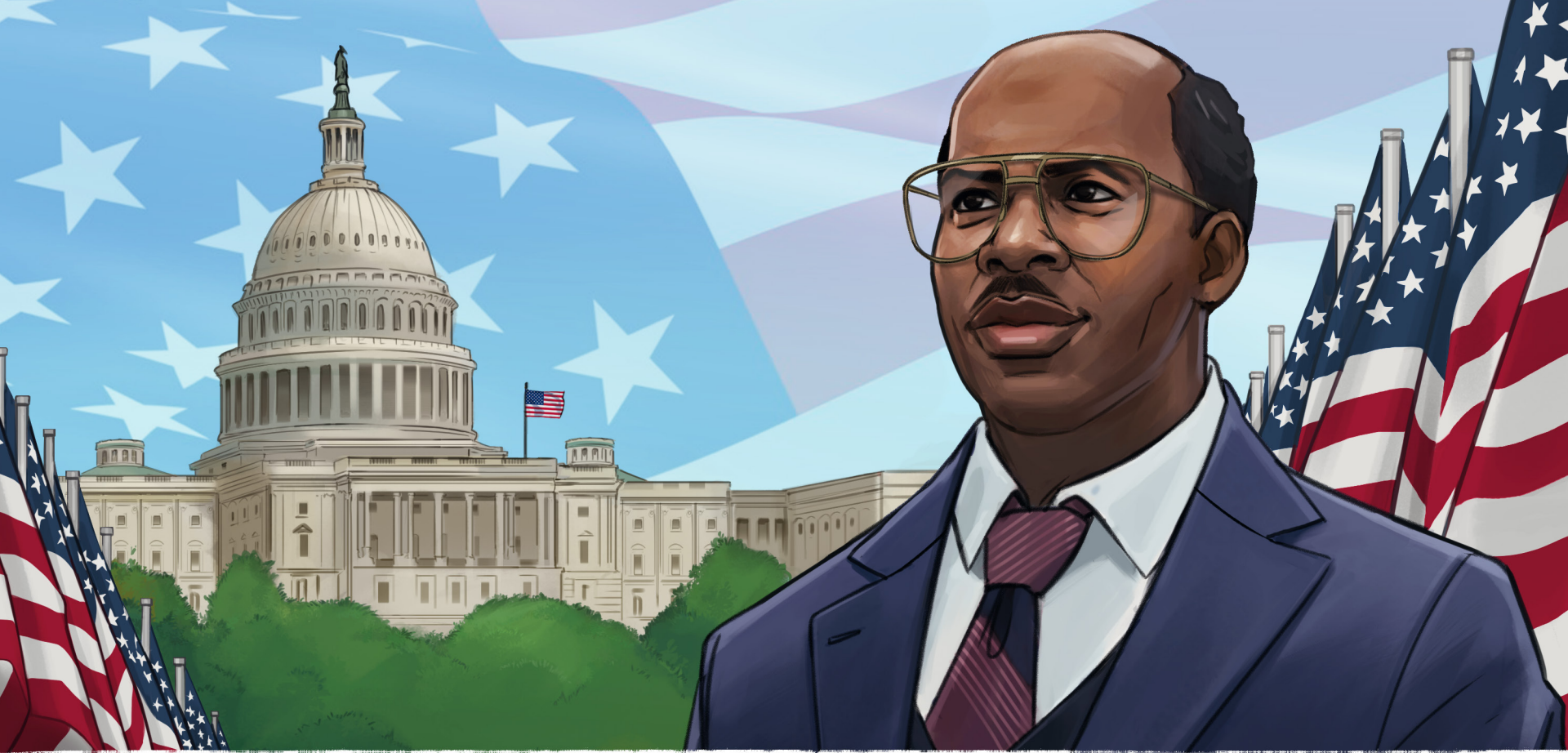
Now John was in power as a politician.

He reminded other politicians to do what was best for their city.

Most of all, he led by example.

John's light continued to shine bright!





1986

John Lewis became a Congressman. Throughout his life, John never wanted to break the laws. He wanted to change the laws!

As a lawmaker, John became a light for other lawmakers around him. He spoke up when something was not fair! He found a way to get in trouble—good trouble—to change people's lives.

2011

President Obama placed the Presidential Medal of Freedom around John Lewis's neck.

“When parents teach their children what is meant by courage, the story of John Lewis will come to mind,” he explained.

Now the world knew what John always knew.

It is good to get in trouble sometimes—necessary trouble to change people's lives.





Elizabeth Gray is the author of *Good Trouble: The Story of John Lewis*. She and her husband live outside of Washington, D.C. They are both writers, dreamers, and creators. Together they have 12 nieces, 4 nephews, 8 godchildren, and over 500 students they hold near to their hearts. Each book she writes is a seed of inspiration she hopes to plant.



Raymond Sébastien is a French artist based in Paris. He has worked in the video game industry for eight years. His graphic style is inspired by Afro, pop, and fashion culture—all bathed in the warm and shimmering colors of his native island Martinique. Since his childhood, he has always been fascinated by creating an original and colorful universe.

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