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Up

Gillian Streeter

gstreeter@fortbend.lib.tx.us

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LaMarche, Jim. *Up*. Illustrated by Jim LaMarche. Chronicle, 2006. ISBN 0811844455. \$16.95.
32 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Picture books;

Subject: Self-actualization--Juvenile fiction; Psychokinesis--Juvenile fiction; Brothers--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

LaMarche, who won acclaim for his delicate illustrations in *The Rainbabies*, again shows his sense of emotion, color, and style in *Up*, the second book he has written and illustrated. Mouse (who is actually named Daniel) is the younger of two brothers. Michael gets to help their father out on the fishing boat, but Daniel is too small to help (something Michael reminds him of repeatedly). In a moment of frustration, Daniel somehow causes a small cracker to float very briefly above a table. While he gets better at levitating with practice and can lift heavier and heavier items, he can't move them around and he can't lift them very high up. Daniel wonders how his ability can be useful—and promptly has an opportunity to use his power to help.

The story is simple and universal—a small boy wanting to be bigger and stronger. The text is suited to older readers or to be read aloud for younger readers. The main attraction of the book is its beautiful illustrations—LaMarche's acrylic washes and colored pencils create images suffused with light and color. The sea, sky, and landscapes are almost iridescent and everything has a soft texture and glow to it. The overall effect is that of wistful nostalgia (there are no cars or computers in sight) and wonder. This book should be included in libraries and especially in homes if not for the story then for the sake of its pictures alone.