

KIRKUS REVIEWS

TITLE INFORMATION

THE AMAZINGLY AWESOME AMANI

Jamiyl Samuels and Tracy-Ann Samuels

Illus. by Nidhom

Mascot Books (38 pp.)

\$14.95 hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-68401-610-5; April 4, 2018

BOOK REVIEW

An African-American boy with a great imagination becomes a superhero in this picture book.

Amani loves to read—especially comics about Amazing Man. He doesn't talk much, though, and kids at school gossip about him. At bedtime, his mom gives him a pep talk, saying that he's "a very *special boy*." Later, Amani wakes to hear a bully stealing a soccer ball from a smaller kid outside. He puts on a superhero outfit and becomes "AWESOME AMANI." Using his sister Sandy's jump rope, he climbs out his window, trips up the bully with another ball, and returns the soccer ball to its owner. Amani hears his mom calling, but he's horrified to see Sandy dangling the jump rope out of reach. Then Amani wakes up with a shout. His parents rush in; his dad says, "that must have been some dream," and Amani says it was "awesome." Samuels and Samuels (*Pass the Torch*, 2016) dedicate their book to those who assist children with autism and learning challenges. Its ending feels slightly clichéd, but youngsters will find Amani's vivid imagination and dream life relatable. The book also effectively depicts the impact of loving, supportive parents. Nidhom's (*Cathy, the Cow Who Couldn't Moo*, 2017, etc.) charming illustrations add bold dimension and character to the story.

An uplifting tale about empathy and courage.

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