



LEAF BY LEAF

an imprint of **Cinnamon Press**

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Fiction
ISBN: 978-1-78864-936-0
£10.99
300 pp
25/9/2022

Trade distribution/representation:
Inpress/IPS
(ingrampublisherservices.co.uk)

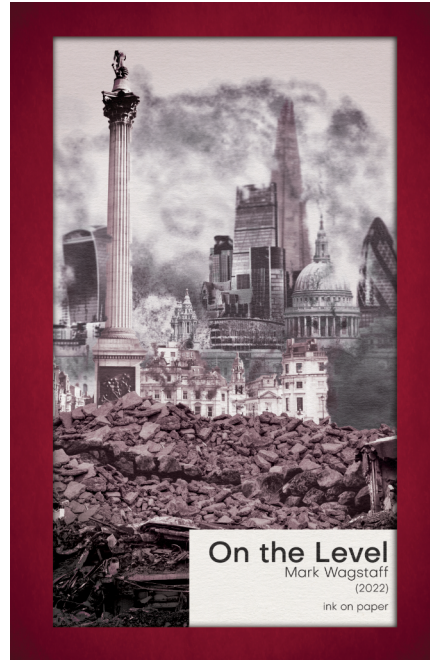


Mark Wagstaff's work has appeared in journals and anthologies in the US and UK. He won the 39th Annual 3-Day Novel Contest with off-kilter romcom *Attack of the Lonely Hearts* published by Anvil Press. Mark's second short story collection *Burn Lines* was published by InkTears.

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ON THE LEVEL

by Mark Wagstaff



Tough teen Riz Montgomery plays high stakes roulette as London burns.

With bugs in her skin and noise in her head, Riz is real and the rest are fake. What matters to her: Mark Rothko's art. So despite the horror of family time, it's a fine thing that a major Rothko show coincides with the global conference where her so-called Dad is such a big wheel.

Holed up with VIPs at a heavily guarded hotel, Riz collides with a sharp-dressed assassin she calls The Man. As she plunges into a world of covert deals and power plays, Riz is befriended and betrayed by Russian and Syrian agents. And emotionally bruised by the leader of a violent anti-capitalist group in town to protest the conference.

Told in Riz's breathless, insistent voice, the edgy friendship between the isolated teen and the travelling killer drives a thrill-ride through riot-torn London.