



# The Infinite

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Reviewer:

[Nicholas Tucker](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

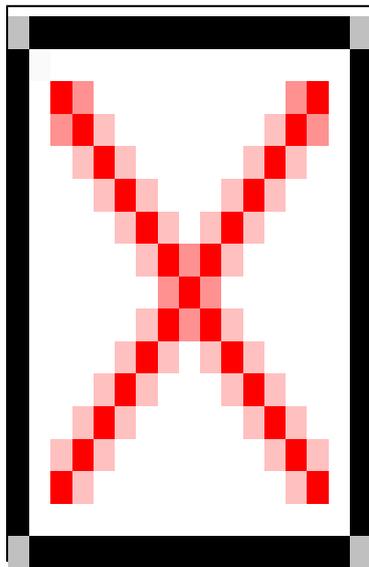
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Media type:

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Elle is aged twelve, but also only three since she was born in a Leap Year. A brilliant runner, she also has Special Needs, at school alternating between feeling tongue-tied and other moments when she says too much. Her best friend Ben is even more disturbed, well into the autistic spectrum. They are both ceaselessly mocked by one particularly unpleasant pupil but their teachers are encouraging and sympathetic.

Thus the background to what becomes an increasingly rich brew. Because of her birth Elle has the ability to leap forwards and back again in time. There are other Leapers who can do this too and they all congregate at a Time Squad Centre twenty eight years into the future. But things there are not as they should be. A mysterious teacher calling himself Le Temps is pursuing policies and practices outlawed in a future climate-change aware society. And guess what? he is in fact the bully who once made Elle's life unhappy at school now grown into malevolent middle age. The only way she can stop him is to return to her original time and try to make friends with this one boy who so has it in for her.

There is so much plot and counter-plot in this debut novel it is almost impossible to follow every twist and turn in a

narrative that takes twisting and turning to a very testing level. But underneath all this activity there is a striking prose style from a writer previously known as a successfully published poet. Born of Nigerian parents but brought up in London, Agbabi is a welcome new voice in junior fiction, well worth savouring. The first instalment in what is going to be **The Leap Cycle** series, this ambitious novel combines respect for the health of the planet with a lively sense of adventure across time. Now for the next!

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