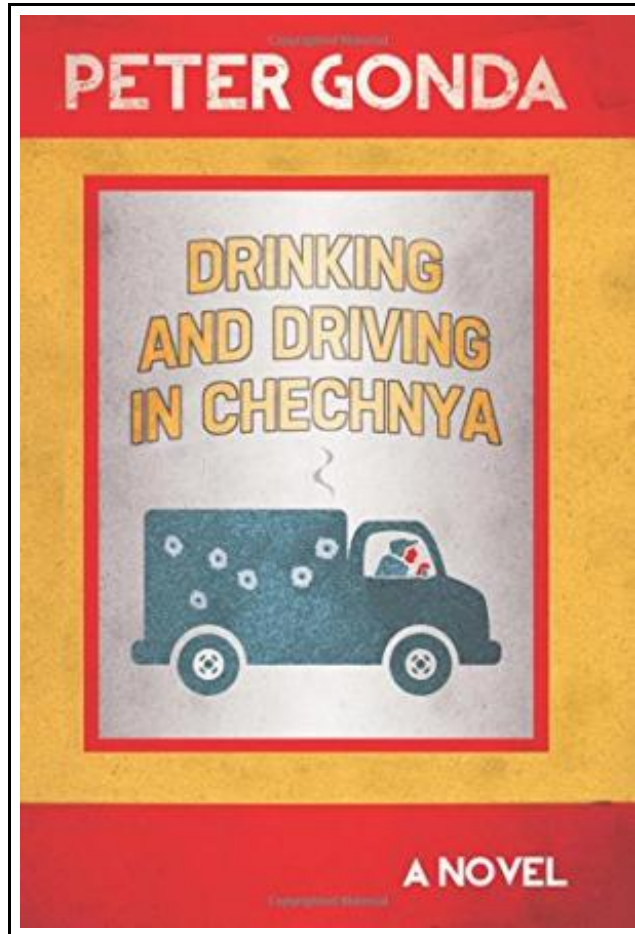


Drinking and Driving in Chechnya



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DRINKING AND DRIVING IN CHECHNYA



Garnet Publishing Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Drinking and Driving in Chechnya, Peter Gonda, Leonid, a hard-luck lorry driver who lives with his raving, war-veteran father in Moscow and ferries less-than-legit shipments of goods all over Russia for his Mafiya bosses, has a single dream: to leave behind the country of his birth, for which he feels nothing but disdain, and immigrate to the United States. It is the mid-1990s, and Russia has only just been "liberated", though precisely what that concept denotes in the post-Soviet world depends on whom you ask - and on who benefits most. However, Leonid knows in his heart of hearts that In America, his happiness will be guaranteed. During a haul to the Caucasus with a cargo of illicit vodka intended for parched soldiers on the front line of the war on Chechnya, Leonid and his sidekick Spasska take a wrong turn and wind up in the centre of Grozny, at the height of one of the cruellest bombardments of the twentieth century. What follows will shock Leonid into a confrontation with the reality that has always played out just beyond his averted gaze, and even his well-honed cynicism and survival instincts will be tested. Destined to become a tough-guy cult classic, this short, sharp debut novel is also a heartfelt contemplation of how we engage with our worst instincts, and sometimes (if all too rarely) rise above them. Like the book in which he stars so vividly, Leonid is a hard nut with a soft centre; you can't help but love the guy, however amoral his behaviour. This is compulsively readable stuff: funny, tender, sad and true.



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