## Drinking and Driving in Chechnya



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## DRINKING AND DRIVING IN CHECHNYA



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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 mid1990s, 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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