



# The Iceman: A Novel

*P.T. Deutermann*

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## The Iceman: A Novel P.T. Deutermann

An action-packed dramatic military thriller based on true events featuring a daring World War II submarine commander.

In 1942, off the coast of France there is a United States Navy submarine lurking just outside the borders of a German U-boat minefield. Luckily, Karl Alexander Steiner likes a good challenge. As the sub's lieutenant commander, Steiner calls the shots, though his enigmatic and cold persona alienates him from the crew members who worry that the chances he takes might be too risky.

After sinking three German U-boats, a feat that no other American or British sub had achieved, Steiner is decorated and promoted. With a new fleet boat on Mare Island, Steiner and his crew set out yet again for the mid-Atlantic Ocean. Although this voyage proves even more successful than the last, Steiner's crew fears his dicey tactics - and begins to undermine his command.

With intense action and the terrifying paranoia of submarine warfare, *The Iceman* is the exciting story of how one daring and determined commander proves the importance of testing luck in WWII naval combat.

## The Iceman: A Novel Details

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Author : P.T. Deutermann

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# From Reader Review The Iceman: A Novel for online ebook

## Keith says

Since I was a teenager one of my most consistent reading genres has been sea stories. I assume this derives in part from my father's service in the WW2 Royal Canadian Navy or maybe all those pirate movies of the 1950s. My enthusiasm has ranged from the adventures under sail of Forester's Hornblower or Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin sea tales to the future naval adventures of authors such as Patrick Robinson or Rick Campbell. The "World War II Navy" \* series of ex-Navy author P.T. Deutermann has become a favorite ever since I read Pacific Glory, the first book of the series in 2012. Iceman is Deutermann's latest and the fifth in the series.

All five novels share a similar narrative thrust: Place fictional characters in very specific combat zones throughout the Pacific theatre of operations. These fictional characters stand in for the many men who sailed in harm's way from 1941 to 1945. What is particularly well wrought is how Deutermann spins his fiction in the midst of these very real battles. Also admirable is that these are men on small boats, destroyers and submarines; carriers, battleships, admirals and others of high rank are mostly relegated to the background. Iceman is the second book in the series, after Ghosts of Bungo Suido, to feature submarine combat and the cramped quarters, unreliable weapons and combat operations are tensely described. Indeed, Captain Gar Hammond in Ghosts of Bungo Suido and Captain Malachi Stormes in Iceman share an affinity for certain unconventional tactics.

(Deutermann has an amusing near-Dickensian affinity for character names. Aside from Gar and Malachi other books feature Glory Hawthorne, Pudge Tallmadge and Harmon Wolf to name just three).

There is no better setting for tension and fear than a submarine at war. There is also no better place for grace under pressure and Stormes possesses that in spades. His coolness is such that it rattles the crew and leads to the "Iceman" moniker. One small example: Stormes orders the sub to attack on the surface, which rattles everyone, then while waiting for his sub to close the distance, he orders the gun crew and watch below and sits down on the bridge to have a cigarette. I appreciated the lesson in submarine attack geometry which clarified my understanding of various tactics. Despite my great enjoyment of Iceman I felt a certain repetition of technical information, particularly with the troubles with the Mk 14 torpedoes. Additionally, like all of Deutermann's books that I've read there is a romance subplot. I appreciate that women provide a poignant example of what we were fighting for, they also provide a strong example of all that women did for the war effort, and they bring a sympathetic ear to the fear and tension all around but it's difficult to bring depth to these relationships within the context of a 320 page novel.

Nevertheless, as with other Deutermann novels I tore through it with a highly focussed attention. What is greatest about these novels, indeed what is brave and virtuous about the characters is that, while fictionally created, they resound with the aura of the real men who served. Just read any good history of the Pacific War and you will hear the stories of the men whom, I am sure, continue to inspire Pete Deutermann.

\* Goodreads refers to the series as "World War 2 Navy" while the author's catalog in Iceman refers to the series as "Sea Stories." This list contains two earlier books, The Edge of Honor and Scorpion in the Sea. Deutermann's personal web site makes no mention of any series classification only featuring individual titles. FYI

Thanks to St. Martin's Press for an advance reading copy of *Iceman*.

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### **Tony Taylor says**

I think you've outdone yourself, Pete... The *Iceman* is definitely deserving as much recognition, if not more, than "... Glory!" I commend your ongoing dedication in bringing to life WWII naval history through thorough research and your creativity in developing characters that reflect the mind and trials of those who served, especially those in the Silent Service. I often found myself relating your tale of submarine ops to those that I grew up hearing from my father who was one of the early batch of aggressive sub skippers who brought new fleet boats to the war during the early months of '42 and was later tasked by Lockwood to "fix the problem" when it came to defective firing pins on the MK 14 torpedos.

Bravo Zulu, shipmate!

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### **Jim says**

Many thanks to St. Martin's Press for an advanced reading copy of P.T. Deutermann's newest WWII military thriller *THE ICEMAN*. This is the 4th of Mr. Deutermann's standalone WWII novels I have read. The previous books include *PACIFIC GLORY*, *GHOSTS OF BUNGO SUIDA* and *THE COMMODORE*. They all are about different ship's captains facing primarily Japanese opponents during the war. They offer a great look at what the United States Navy was facing in the days after Pearl Harbor. I recognized some of the stories from reading nonfiction naval histories about the same war theater and period.

*THE ICEMAN* features Lt. Commander Malachi Stormes a brilliant submarine captain who makes his mark by sinking three German destroyers off the coast of St. Nazaire, France in early 1942. He and his sub are on loan to the British Navy. As a result of this triumph, Stormes is awarded the British "Distinguished Service Order" medal (second only to the Victoria Cross) and is promoted to full Commander by the U.S. Navy. As an additional reward, he is given command of the newish fleet submarine *Firefish* based in Perth, Australia (west coast).

On his first patrol in the Solomon Islands, he breaks with regulations governing the use of Mark 14 torpedoes which gets him into the Admiral's doghouse. In Commander Stormes background is a three year stint in Newport, Rhode Island working on those munitions so he intimately knows their quirks. Because of his sometimes fearless approach to sinking enemy ships, his crew calls him *The Iceman*.

During his shore leaves between patrols, Stormes meets an Australian heiress, Kensie Richmond, who is a surgeon, in a Perth hospital. Her mother, Margery, is looking for a match for Kensie with a social status equal to the Richmond's but who can stop the machinations of Cupid? Lambert the father is hoping that his daughter finds a partner who can help out in his empire. The reader is treated to four patrols of the *Firefish*

and its crew. All are different in the nature and location of the events that take place. Nonstop action alternates with the development of the relationship between Stormes and Kensie. During this phase a deep, dark secret is revealed that could torpedo the relationship.

I could not put the book down. The military action rings true on many fronts. Some real people populate the story. Both Peter Deutermann and his father had long Navy careers. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND this story and the other three I mentioned earlier.

GO! BUY! READ!

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### **Larry says**

P. T. Deutermann's sea-based novels are fascinating introductions to dangerous skills. Just as "Sentinels of Fire" left an indelible impression of what it was like to be in a destroyer screen protecting big ships from kamikaze attacks off Okinawa, and just as "The Commodore" brilliantly described how the use of destroyers evolved during the brutal sea actions off Guadalcanal, "The Iceman" provides considerable insight into what submariners did to carry out their missions and stay alive during the Pacific war's first year or so. Taken together, they are stunning, and Deutermann has written sixteen other books.

Deutermann's mastery of technical detail is really impressive, as is his highly developed set of writing skills. His ability to create fictional characters that seem real elevates his novels into a rarified company of writers (Nicholas Monserrat, C. S. Forester, and David Poyer territory, say). Though he has written excellent thrillers (including the tremendous Cam Richter books), it's his novels of the sea that I wait for most eagerly.

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### **happy says**

Capt Duetermann has once again written an outstanding look at the US Navy in World War II. In this entry to his WW II series he once again turns his eyes to the Silent Service. This time he looks at the early efforts of the Navy to utilize their submarines and some of the problems encountered as prewar attitudes and doctrines are tested and found wanting. These include just what should the subs targets should be (combat ships vs merchant shipping) and most famously – inadequately tested torpedoes and firing mechanisms.

The novel opens with the main character, CDR Malachi Stormes, in command of an obsolescent S-class submarine lurking off of the German U-boat base of St. Nazaire, mapping the mine fields. His coolness under fire and his aggressiveness are established in this scene and he is subsequently transferred to the Submarine Fleet in Darwin, Australia and given the command of a modern fleet boat, the USS Firefish, whose previous commander has been relieved for lack of aggression. His coolness under fire soon causes the crew to nickname him "The Iceman".

In telling the tale of "The Iceman", Capt Deutermann explores many of the issues the Navy had early in the war in just how to use their submarine force. According to the novel in addition to the torpedo failures, just what they should be targeting was a big issue. Naval doctrine has the subs targeting naval vessels, the bigger the better. CDR Stormes feels that they should be targeting the merchant fleet, esp tankers. This leads to some friction between him and his commanders starting with his squadron commander and going up.

However his success shields him from a lot of the fall out for so adamantly disagreeing with his bosses. Another issue touched on is the lack of aggressiveness of submarine commanders early in the war. The author also gives some possible reasons for that lack of aggression.

The author also tells the story of the problems the dogged the MK14 torpedo that the the US submarines carried early in the war. Cdr Stormes has extensive experience with the torpedoes, including a stint on the development board. He figures out what the problem is and successfully modifies the settings and has a very successful first patrol. He again runs into problems with his bosses when he deactivates the magnetic triggers, which just don't work. He boss however was on the board that developed them and issues a command that magnetic triggers WILL be used.

In telling the story of the Firefish, the author looks at just what makes CDR Stormes tick, the horrible secret he is carrying, how that secret affects both his personality and his relationships with both his crew and the other sub commanders in his squadron. The author also looks at some of the moral dilemmas that the submarine commanders faced. These include just what to do about survivors of the ships he sinks. In one memorable scene, he actively machine guns the crew of a flying boat he catches floating on the surface. This scene triggers a confrontation with his XO, who wants nothing to do with it. I felt the author handled both the scene and the subsequent actions very well.

There is also a love story sandwiched in between patrols. After his first patrol, Malachi meets and falls for an Australian Surgeon. She happens to be the daughter of one of the more important citizens of Western Australia. He eventually unburdens his soul and tells her his secret.

As usual with Cap Deutermann, he writes of the rhythms of shipboard life excellently. He makes the characters believable and sympathetic. I basically inhaled this book, finishing it in two days. (I had to go to work, or I would have finished it in one sitting?) My rating if GR allowed would be 4.75 stars so I rounded up.

In fairness, I received an advanced copy of this novel from St. Martins Press in exchange for an honest review. There were some copy editing problems (misspellings and a couple of missing words) that I'm sure will be fixed in the print edition.

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### **Craig Pearson says**

When I asked for a copy of this book to read and review I expected to read about a screamer of a commanding officer whos hubris and incompetence put his crew and boat in constant danger. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The CO, nicknamed the Iceman by the crew, is a dedicated and knowledgable submariner who only wanted to sink Japanese ships. His icy personality was brought about by his early past and he has difficulty relating to the crew and officers in a human way. Of course, that all slowly changes as the story progresses. This is a well crafted World War II novel with realistic battle action. Very good book!

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### **Chuck says**

No one tells a naval action story like P.T. Deutermann in my opinion. Of course he is a Naval Academy graduate and served 26 years in the U.S. Navy; that may have something to do with it. Beyond that though,

he is a wordsmith with a great writing style. He makes the reader a member of his ship's crew and you actually live the story. This is a submarine story and begins with a bit of live history which introduces us to our hero, Commander/Captain Malachi Stormes, serving in the Atlantic fleet during 1942. Soon, though, he is transferred to the Pacific fleet operating out of Freemantle/Perth Australia which plays a key role in supporting our Marines in the Solomon Islands and, in fact, defending Australia from a possible Japanese invasion. He is given command of the USS Firefish and his crew is astonished at his aggressive tactics which are diametrically opposed to those of their previous skipper. This is a high octane, take no prisoners and come home with no torpedoes tale. Buckle up and hang on. I loved it.

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## **John says**

Thanks to St. Martin's Press and NetGalley for giving me the opportunity to read this advance copy of *The Iceman* by PT Deutermann in exchange for an impartial review.

The main character in this World War II submarine thriller is Commander Malachi Stormes, USN. It begins off the French coast in 1942 where Stormes takes his sub dangerously close to the entrance of a heavily mined German port where he torpedoes and sinks a group three U-boats as they leave the harbor. For this he is decorated by the British and promoted to full captain by the American navy. He is sent to the Pacific and given command of a newer submarine, the USS Firefish, based in Perth, Australia. After the fall of the Philippines and the rapid advance of the Japanese, Australia is the only safe base available. For the Firefish's first mission they are sent out to patrol the main channel, known as "The Slot", that the Japanese are using to attack the ships surrounding Guadalcanal. The mission is a spectacular success and the crew is thrilled of their accomplishments, but are a little afraid of their new skipper. They call Stormes "The Iceman" because he is so daring and calm in action, and willing to take dangerous chances to accomplish his mission.

I have read a couple of WWII submariners' diaries and Deutermann's descriptions of submarine life and action are very accurate and descriptive. He also stays away from the standard submarine plot devices giving a very fresh look at the Silent Service. He includes descriptions of the day to day life on a sub while including enough thrilling action that it is never boring. He even manages to throw in a little romance without it getting in the way of the main story. It deals a lot with the very real problems the skippers had with the torpedoes in use in the early war. They were very erratic and often failed to explode. The Navy refused to listen and blamed the problems on poor tactics by the submariners. The book provides an interesting look at the politics involved. Although somewhat of a student of WWII I learned a lot from this book which reads like an outstanding cross between a history book and a thriller. I would highly recommend this novel to anyone with an interest in wartime action and the Pacific war and submarines in particular. Stormes is a fascinating character with an interesting background and real human foibles. My only minor quibble is his repeatedly referring to his cigarettes as "cancer sticks." I between that term was first appeared in about 1958. But apart from that very minor compliant I very much enjoyed this book.

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## **Rob Roy says**

In fairness, I received an advanced copy from St. Martin's Press probably based on the fact that I have read

everything P. T. Deutermann has written. Yes, he is one of my favorite authors. Now for the review:

This is the fifth historical novel he has written about naval efforts in the Pacific during World War II. While each is distinct and different, each has the same theme, Leadership. Iceman is no exception. It is the story of a submarine Captain fighting the Japanese, the Naval bureaucracy, and his own demons. All of this is woven into the story of a submarine's exploits. In short, a naval thriller. While not a submariner, I did spend 25 years in the Navy, and he gets it right. That is not always true of naval adventures.

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## **Paul J. Petersen says**

### **Outstanding WWII submarine story**

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It is one of the best WWII (fiction) stories I have read. It is great when you find a book to read that you cannot put down, when you are so involved in the story that you do not want to be interrupted. Sadly I have reached the end.

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