

Book Review: Storm Tide (Mike Bowditch Mysteries Book 16)
By Paul Doiron

Thanks to NetGalley and St. Martin's Press for this advance reader's copy, in exchange for an honest review. "Storm Tide" is scheduled for release on June 30, 2026.

As I tend to do with most book series, I'm coming to the Mike Bowditch Mysteries just a touch on the late side. But better late than never.

"Storm Tide" is author Paul Doiron's 16th in the series on Maine Game Warden Mike Bowditch. And the nice part of it, aside from the fact that it's a well-written novel, is that you don't have to have read any of the previous 15 books to know what's going on.

And trust me, there's *a lot* going on.

The story opens with a gut punch. A raging fire consumes the mansion-like home of entrepreneur Brian Malloy and his wife – with them inside. Only their toddler is rescued, neighbor Karen Kershaw standing outside the inferno with the child in her arms. But the fire is suspicious, Malloy having been suspected, but acquitted, of murdering his young, illegitimate son. Not many people in town like the Malloys.

Soon thereafter, the body of Axl Deming, once accused of a brutal rape but acquitted, is found on a railroad track literally torn in half.

Is there a connection? It might not seem so, except that Bowditch has begun receiving cryptic text messages from an unknown number drawing him to the scene of the incidents. And the messages convey a consistent message: their author is someone Bowditch knows, and perhaps wronged in the past.

Meanwhile, Bowditch is facing a disciplinary hearing from a prior incident that could negatively impact his career; his wife Stacey is just weeks from giving birth to their first child; and their home is being watched.

The story unfolds over the course of one year, with the narrative divided into seasonal sections. Doiron paints vivid images of Maine throughout the changing landscape, and Bowditch is a likeable enough protagonist with sufficient flaws that he can be human while still being heroic. The pace is steady throughout. And while there are no major shocks or plot twists, it's a nicely layered murder-mystery that will keep you turning the pages.

Four stars for "Storm Tide", the 16th book in the Mike Bowditch Mysteries. It might just convince you (as it has me) to go back 15 years and check out the first book in the series, "The Poacher's Son."