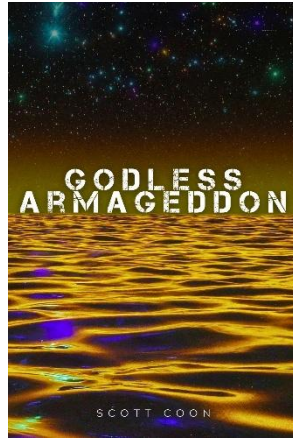


*Godless Armageddon*  
by Scott Coon  
Hypatia Press  
Review by Joseph Sullivan



*Godless Armageddon* is a speculative fiction novel by Scott Coon, detailing the surreal journey of a WWII soldier. Thomas Jefferson Stoneshield VII dies in the Normandy landings, and winds up in a warped afterlife where strange abominations hunt individual souls across a wasteland. He must not only survive the afterlife but come to terms with his own unfinished business from before his death.

The writing of *Godless Armageddon* reflects the unusual setting of the novel, the afterlife. Unlike when they inhabit live human bodies, here in the afterlife, souls do not have eyes or ears, so what they ‘see’ and ‘hear’ is different. Coon translates well the new forms of perception to the reader, especially with regular reminders that the characters themselves find it just as jarring, fresh after dying.

Despite its outlandish premise, Coon uses the afterlife of his novel to address themes that relate to the living. The core of the novel revolves around regrets, leaving things unspoken or undone in life and stressing the importance of closure in life. The various creatures our protagonist encounters in the afterlife reflect the battle between the freedom of the individual versus belonging to a collective, a conflict that—according to *Godless Armageddon*—endures even after death.

Protagonist Thom is a compelling figure whose post-mortem path is more complicated than his life. A gay man, Thom never came out in life, and fears that this is responsible for the end of his family name, so he seeks out his father to confess the truth about himself. His arc keeps the novel relatable on a personal level to the reader, even as he encounters other souls in the afterlife beyond his initial understanding.

*Godless Armageddon* is apt for readers with curiosity in speculative fiction about the afterlife, those who enjoy a character-driven story about making up for regrets, and those intrigued by the idea of social commentary from the dead.