



# The 207th Bone

## 二零七之骨

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**BFT2.0 Translator:** Brian Hioe

The Qidu are extraordinary warriors whose power comes from an additional bone that humans lack—the 207<sup>th</sup> bone. However, this power comes at a devastating cost: the Qidu mother is killed at childbirth.

For women members of the Qidu clan, pregnancy is fatal. As the fetus matures, it develops a blade-shaped bone that tears through the mother's abdomen, resulting in her death. Equipped with a powerful natural weapon, the child grows up to be a powerful warrior.

The story is set in a war-ravaged world, where the Qidu's prowess has brought the militarily superior Half-Dragon Empire to the brink of defeat. This character-driven book delves into whether the daughters of the Qidu family can break free from the oppressive chains of patriarchal tradition and forge their own path.



## LIN, I-CHEN

I-Chen Lin is a comic artist and illustrator who made his debut with *Mosina*, a youth comic series. He won the Best Potential Award at the 3rd Golden Comic Awards and was nominated for the 7th Golden Comic Awards in Prototype Design for Yu Jian'er and the Youth Comic Award. *The 207th Bone* is his second independently published comic work and has received significant acclaim. It won the Best Comic of the Year at the 14th Golden Comic Awards, the 2023 Golden Butterfly Award (First Edition), and the Bronze Award at the 17th Japan International Manga Award. Lin I-Chen also received a grant from the Ministry of Culture's 108th Year for original comic content development and cross-industry development and marketing.

# The 207th Bone

by Brian Hioe

*The 207th Bone* is a unique and compelling work, distinguished not only by its strong characters but also by its highly imaginative setting. In many ways, *The 207th Bone* feels like a fusion of *The Handmaid's Tale* and Hayao Miyazaki's *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*.

The story unfolds in a war-torn world where the technologically advanced Half-Dragon Empire clashes with the fiercely independent Lianye City-State, ruled by the warrior clan known as the Qidu. Although the empire boasts greater military power, the relentless ferocity of the Qidu has brought the empire to the brink of defeat.

The Qidu are no ordinary fighters; their supernatural combat skills stem from an extra bone that ordinary humans lack—the titular 207th Bone. This unique trait allows them to use their bones as weapons and armor in battle, with combat sequences reminiscent of Sui Ishida's Tokyo Ghoul.

But the Qidu's powers come at a steep

price. In the process of birth, Qidu mothers are killed by their children. This grim reality has shaped a patriarchal and war-driven society, where matricide is seen as a natural, primal act. Abortion is the highest crime among the Qidu, as it is viewed as a perversion of this brutal natural order, allowing mothers to survive childbirth.

At the novel's outset, Princess Hengpo of the Half-Dragon Empire has just married the Second Prince of the Qidu. However, Hengpo soon flees while pregnant, accompanied by Qidu Hachixie, the half-human son of the Qidu emperor, and pursued by Sayi, the Qidu emperor's top executioner.

This sets the plot in motion, with the stakes extending beyond the ongoing war to a deeper conflict between two vastly different ideologies, particularly regarding the role of women in society. As the story quickly reveals, Hengpo is not merely a princess but a leading scientist from the Half-Dragon Empire, who infiltrated Qidu society under the guise of royalty to learn

the secrets of the Qidu.

Visually, *The 207th Bone* is striking, with distinct aesthetics defining both the Half-Dragon and Qidu empires. Lin

excels at worldbuilding, deftly establishing the cultural and political tensions between the two factions. The setting stands out in the genre for its seamless blending of science fiction and fantasy elements. Artist Lin I-chen proves adept at handling complex, action-packed scenes with skillful paneling, guiding the reader through moments of exposition and intense combat alike.

Yet the true strength of *The 207th Bone* lies in its character-driven narrative. The story's momentum is propelled by the motivations and choices of its key characters: Hengpo, Sayi, and Hachixie.

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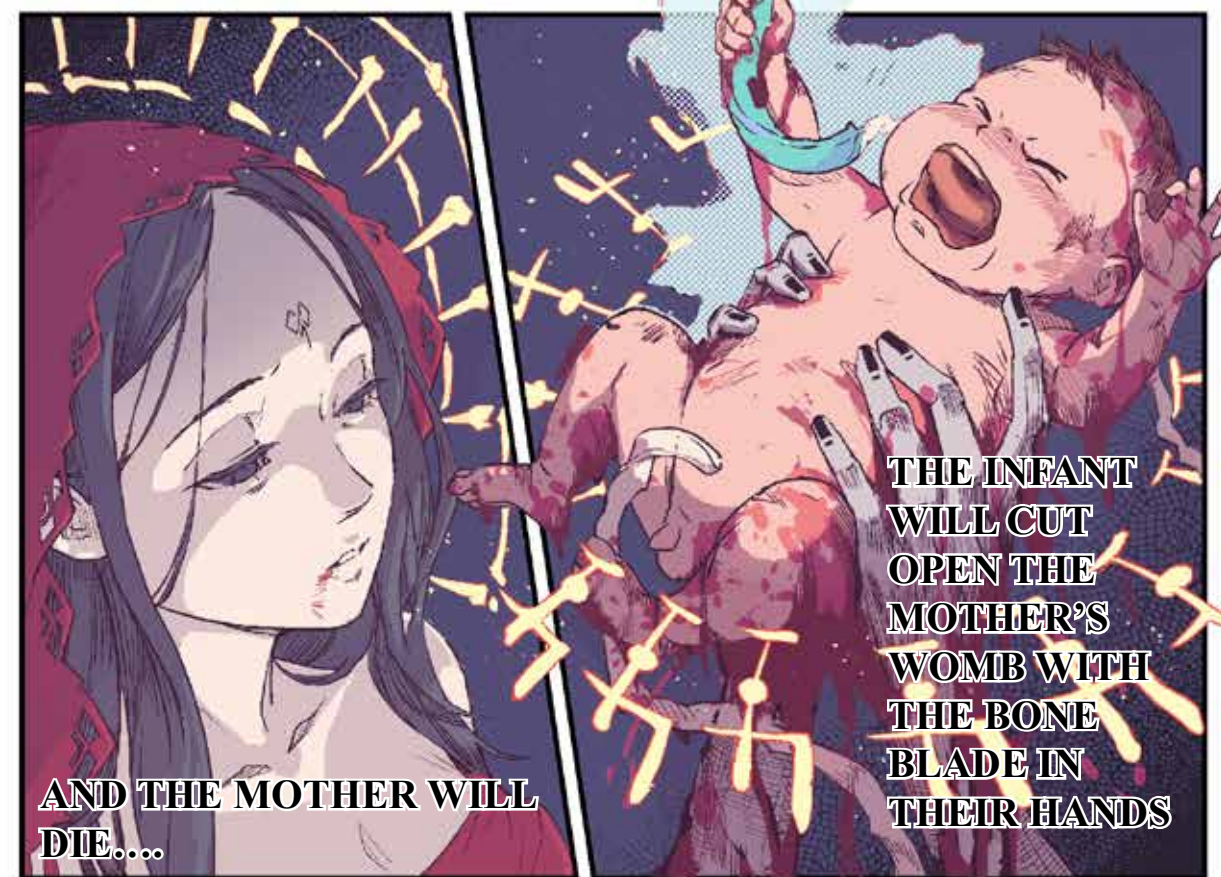
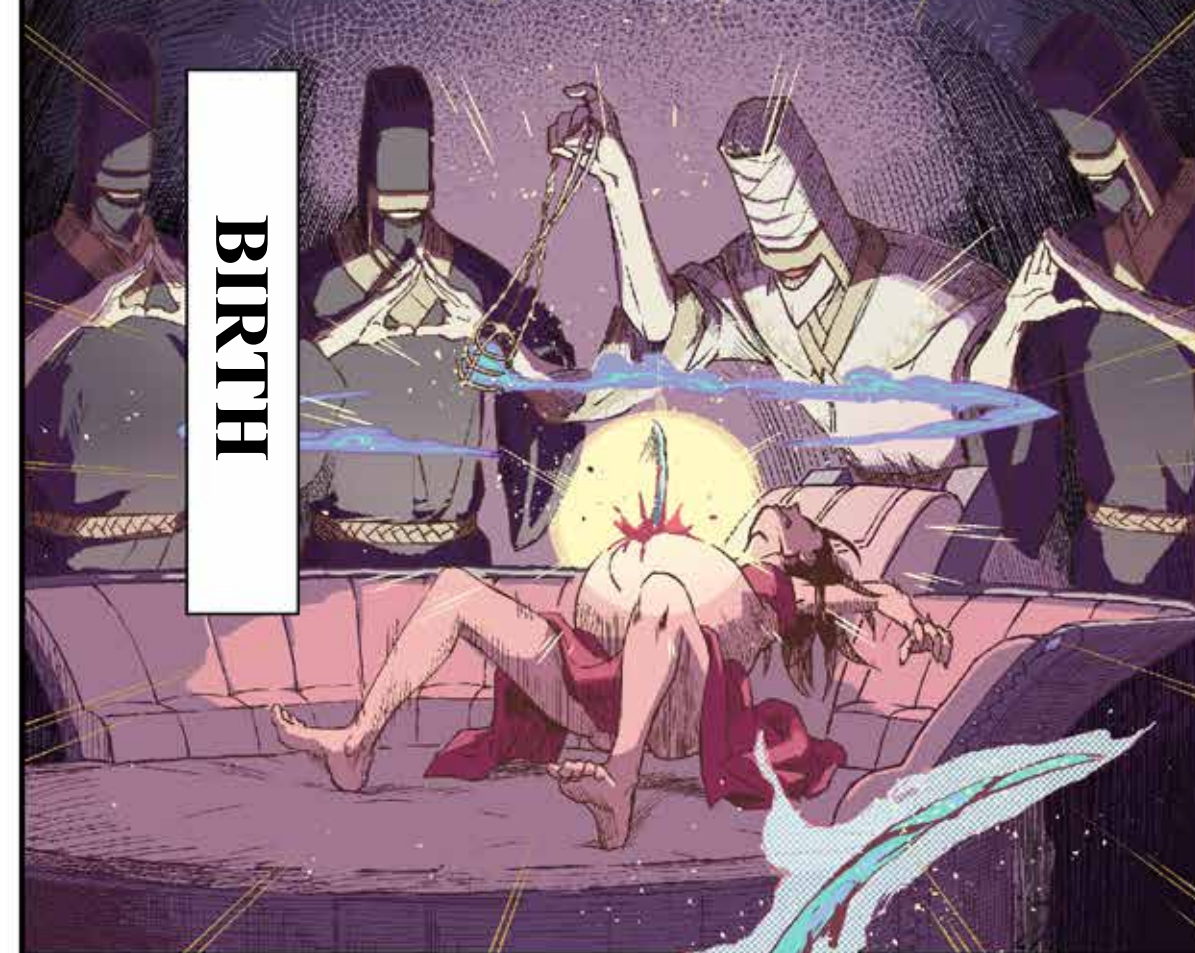
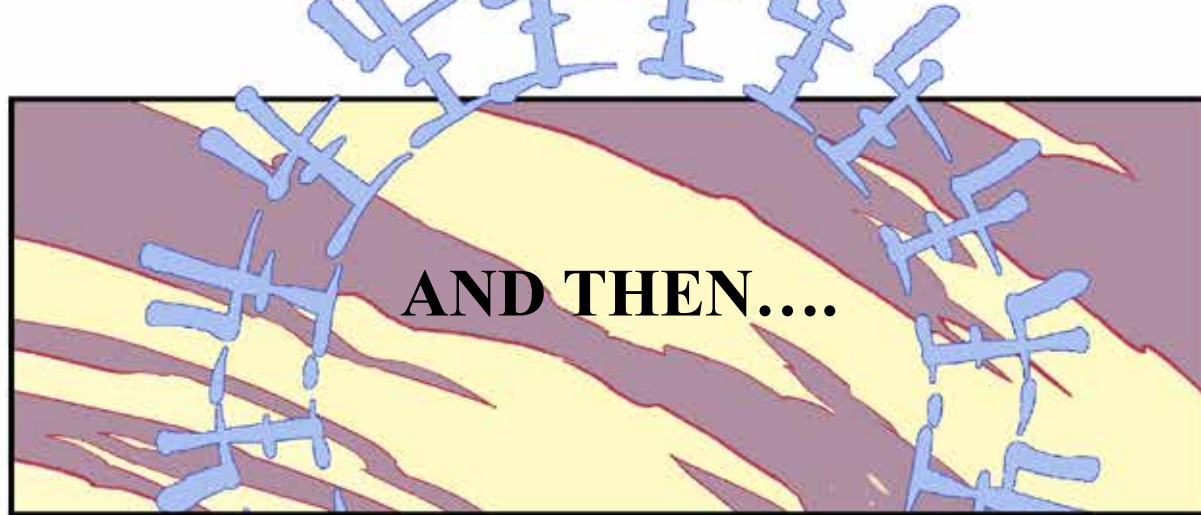
Sayi, in particular, is a fascinating character—while she serves as the Qidu empire's chief enforcer, she remains constrained by its patriarchal norms. Hengpo,

too, is a well-developed character; though she initially enters the Qidu as a spy, she grows empathetic toward their plight.

*The 207th Bone* stands as a compelling entry in contemporary Taiwanese fantasy comics, distinguished by its rich worldbuilding, dynamic characters, and thought-provoking themes.

*Brian Hioe is a writer, editor, activist, and one of the founders of New Bloom Magazine.*







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