

## The Growth 247

### Chapter 247 7: Fourth-Generation Skeletons (1/3)

Tianyou was a skeleton blessed by heaven, a fact acknowledged by all skeletons who knew it.

Tianyou was born in the White Bone City, the first skeleton to truly realize the perfect fusion of metallic skeleton and flesh and blood armor in the truest sense.

It should be noted that since the emergence of the third generation of skeletons, research on the fourth generation has been put on the agenda.

Especially under the leadership of the fifth leader of the skeletons—A Su, the future development direction of the fourth generation of skeletons has become a key issue concerning the entire skeleton race.

Some once suggested that since the third generation of skeletons possessed real metallic skeletons, perhaps "gigantism" could be incorporated into their future evolution?

Others once suggested to continue strengthening the metallic skeletons of the skeletons, endowing it with attributes of true immortality akin to gods.

Until Tianyou completed the mission to the Light Realm and returned to the Mountain and Sea Realm.

A Su was surprised to find that Tianyou's metallic skeleton and flesh and blood armor seemed to have achieved a subtle symbiosis?

For Tianyou, the flesh and blood armor was no longer just a simple tool, but became a part of its existence.

Just like the parasites that achieve a symbiotic relationship with their hosts.

Without Tianyou's conscious control, the flesh and blood armor instinctively provided protection and enhancement.

—It's truly unbelievable, the "tool" actually evolved its instincts?

This was A Su's conclusion after a comprehensive examination of Tianyou.

Although the flesh and blood armor looked no different from normal biological flesh and blood, and similarly showed biological-like activity.

But in essence, it was ultimately just a "tool" woven by skeletons using high-strength carbon-based fibers.

Just like the various modern equipment made by humans, no matter how precise or wondrous they are, they are just handy tools.

However, the flesh and blood armor, also born as a tool, actually broke through this boundary.

Even more unbelievable is that the flesh and blood armor, possessing astounding proliferative and growth capabilities, did not evolve into an independent organism like true biological entities.

So, under repeated inquiries and discussions among A Su and the Zhiku bigwigs, they finally understood the reason why the flesh and blood armor evolved parasitic attributes and protective instincts.

The skeletons are an undead kind, beings revived from the dead.

This fact remains unchanged regardless of which stage of evolution the skeletons reach.

Precisely because of this undead identity, Tianyou, after going to the Light Realm, was constantly stimulated by the Light Realm's radiance.

Even Tianyou, with its metallic skeleton, had to maintain the state of flesh and blood armor for a long time to prevent the Light Realm's radiance from gradually killing it.

However, maintaining the state of flesh and blood armor for such a long time is no simple matter.

From consciously maintaining the flesh and blood armor at every moment to gradually no longer needing to deliberately think about it, it took Tianyou quite a while to adapt to this feeling.

During this process, Tianyou's [Exorcism Skill] played a crucial role.

Because Tianyou actually attempted to endow the flesh and blood armor with "spirituality" and unexpectedly succeeded.

In some sense, what happened to Tianyou was just a coincidence.

A coincidence achieved under the circumstances of perfect timing, location, and harmony of people.

So with the example of Tianyou as a "sample," replicating this coincidence became an urgent issue for A Su and the Zhiku bigwigs to resolve.

Not pursuing power, not pursuing strength...

The ultimate plan for the "fourth generation of artificial life" set by Zhiku was to remedy the inherent flaws of the skeletons as much as possible, so that skeletons would no longer fear any form of sunlight.

In the favor of the Creator Li Hao, time in the Mountain and Sea Realm has never been very precious.

Especially for the skeletons, the completion of the "fourth generation artificial life" with all their might represents the future of their race, prompting them to spare no effort, time, or resources.

Thus, after many twists and turns, the perfect fourth-generation skeleton finally came into being.

From Li Hao's perspective, the fourth-generation skeletons can actually no longer be considered true undead in the strictest sense.

They are a brand new race that exists somewhere between the living and the dead, derived from skeletons.

Their skeletons are made of high-strength silicon-based metal...

Their flesh and blood are composed of high-density carbon-based fibers...

They possess the souls of the dead as well as the brains of the living...

They have both the perceptions and survival methods of the undead and the living...

To them, the flesh and blood armor is no longer a "tool" that requires effort to maintain but a "body" that can naturally protect their skeleton for long periods.

The fourth-generation skeletons can shed the protection of flesh and blood armor, wandering the dark world in an undead identity.

But they can also face their "nemesis"—sunlight, appearing in the luminous Sacred Sanctuary as living beings.

Most crucially, the flesh that grows with the skeleton inherits all the traits of the flesh and blood armor and can perfectly accept, or even directly generate implants with different functions.

If there weren't beings called "Ascenders" in this world, who have surpassed the limits of individual organisms, the fourth-generation skeletons could be rightfully called the "Ultimate Life."

Even so, the emergence of the fourth-generation skeletons still caused an enormous uproar in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

After all, the Mountain and Sea Realm today is not a time when skeletons hold sole dominance.

With the unification of language, script, customs, beliefs, systems, technology, and even thought, the Mountain and Sea Realm are now the realm of the "Mountain and Sea People."

Setting aside the older generation, the new generation basically recognizes their identity as "Mountain and Sea People."

When needing to travel and train in the Marz World, the Divine Fall Realm, and the Light Realm.

Regardless of the individual's race, when abroad, they uniformly identify themselves as "Mountain and Sea People."

Only when they return to the Mountain and Sea Realm do they use their original race as a moniker for differentiation between the different races.

This moniker is akin to regional divisions in China and does not affect their sense of identity with the unified identity as "Mountain and Sea People."

In this scenario, the series of technologies that arose with the birth of the fourth-generation skeletons naturally also spread throughout the entire group of "Mountain and Sea People."

Despite the flesh and blood armor having extremely high compatibility requirements for races other than skeletons.

Those variously functional implants have no such limitation.

These implants, which are produced using biological technology, greatly enriched the daily lives of the "Mountain and Sea People."

Certain individuals aspiring to become Ascenders have drastically reduced the difficulty of ascending the [Ascension Ladder] with the help of various implants.

—Advanced technology and productivity always serve the widest masses.

This is the aphorism by the skeletons' leader, the leader of the Mountain and Sea People—A Su, engraved on the "Creator Altar" in the White Bone City.