

# Connecting Feelings

## Rin x Haruka

Von \_Shary\_

### Kapitel 1:

It was a Thursday evening as 12-year-old Rin was sitting at the dinner table at home together with his mother. Gou had already gone to bed since it was long past her bed time. As the older brother, Rin always enjoyed the privileges of being allowed to stay up later than her which was very much to her dislike. They were watching an English movie with Japanese subtitles as they had begun doing recently. Rin's mom wanted to make sure his English was good enough to get along when he went to Australia in a few months and this seemed to be a convenient method for her. It was annoying for the redhead but he had to back down or she would get angry at him. And nobody wanted to make Mrs. Matsuoka angry! She was a kind mother but also very strict and demanding. Ever since their father had died, she had focused on their children's career or, more precisely, on Rin's career by investing in his swimming talent. That's why she had made his home stay in Australia possible. As long as Rin concentrated on improving his talent she supported him in every way; she even went along with his impulsive idea to transfer schools all of a sudden even though he'd be gone to Australia soon anyway.

That's why they were watching an English action movie now while eating pickled mackerel. Rin wasn't really concentrating on the movie though. His thoughts were still with today's practice. Since Nagisa had entered their team there were finally enough people to participate in the relay, but was that enough? Entering the relay was one thing, but he also wanted to win! He had transferred to Iwatobi to be able to swim in a relay with Haru, whose skills he had admired since that one day they had raced each other and he had lost. He wanted to show Sousuke and his old team mates who they'd be facing in the relay how fast he could be with Haru by his side. He knew that he and Haru would make the best team if they learned how to work together and to synchronize; he just knew it. Together they might be able to win Regionals or even Nationals! And maybe... maybe even the Olympics. Of course that was a far-away dream of the future, but Rin liked to dream big and he was ready to give all he had to make it happen someday. At least he wanted to be an Olympic swimmer and maybe Haru would eventually realize his destiny too.

However, they had to concentrate on Elementary Regionals right now. Even though they were all good swimmers, they didn't really work as a team yet. Haru hadn't accepted him completely. Something inside Rin told him that Haru wasn't the person

to adjust to new people in his environment quickly. It had been a miracle that he had accepted to form a team with Rin anyway, even though the redhead had just entered the black haired boy's world violently and without any warning. He was sure that somewhere deep down the other boy had felt their connection too, otherwise he wouldn't have gone out of his way to swim with him at all.

But it wasn't enough yet. His feelings hadn't reached Haru completely. They needed to connect with each other perfectly to build the best team. Haru only swam because he felt like it and with no explicit goal. But that wasn't enough for a serious match. One had to give it their best to reach their goal and that was something enjoyable too, right? At least that was what it was like for Rin. Swimming with or against your friends, connecting your feelings to them and spurring each other's ambition. That's what he and Sousuke had done all the time but he wanted to show Haru how great this felt, too. He had to win Haru over fully but how was he supposed to do that?

In the corner of his eyes he noticed the main superhero on screen dodging an enemy's attack with his super powers. The protagonist was a highschooler but at night he was a super hero disguised as a police man who fought for justice. It was kind of cool. Maybe Rin would enjoy the movie after all, had he paid more attention to it. The enemy had kidnapped the hero's love interest and thus lured him out for a direct fight. Even though he and the girl had always quarreled with each other during the film and were more like rivals in class, the protagonist was secretly in love with her but he didn't have the courage to tell her yet. After some more minutes of awesome looking fighting with special effects, the hero finally rescued the girl and they were flying through the air while exchanging a long and meaningful stare, her long black hair blowing in the wind. After they landed on the ground the girl finally returned to her senses and turned her back on him.

"So... I guess that was the best chance for you to show off once again. You want me to thank you so that you can tease me with that later. Well...thank yo-"

That moment he grabbed her waist, drew her closer and kissed her passionately.

At first her blue eyes widened in shock, but then there was a spark appearing in her eyes and she closed them and returned his kiss. Suddenly a firework went off in the background, painting the whole sky in all thinkable colours and illuminating them in sparkling lights.

It was very romantic. Rin bit his lip and fought the tears because he didn't want to cry like a baby in front of his mother. Man, that was so embarrassing! He was already 12, he shouldn't be emotional because of such a scene. Take it like a real man!

After that scene the girl finally realized the protagonist's feelings and returned them. After she fell in love with him too she wanted to stay by his side forever and later she became a police woman and together they fought for justice side by side.

When the movie was over and Rin returned to his thoughts from before, an idea suddenly struck him. In the movie the girl had understood the boy's feeling at once when he kissed her. It was true that kisses held a special meaning, otherwise they wouldn't always be that important in movies. Maybe the one true way to connect to other people's feelings was to also connect to their body. It was a kind of romantic idea, but it did make sense, didn't it?

So he had to kiss Haru in order to make him understand and swim together as a

perfect team! But he couldn't just walk towards him and kiss him directly, that was obvious.

But moreover, the girl had also fallen in love with the protagonist after he had kissed her. Of course he didn't want Haru to fall in love with him; he was a boy after all! And romance was obviously something between girls and boys only. He just wanted to build the perfect team together with Haru. But maybe the fall-in-love part was only true if you kissed a girl? Yeah, that was most likely the case!

His mother shook him off his thoughts. "Rin, you should go to bed now. Do you want the leftover mackerels for your bento tomorrow?"

Rin's eyes caught the mackerels lying on the table. That was the solution!

"Thanks mom! That's a great idea! Good night!"

He grinned enthusiastically and then ran upstairs towards his room.

"Quietly! Your sister is sleeping already!"

"Sorry!", came his voice from upstairs.

Shaking her head, she was left alone in the kitchen. Sometimes her son had the strangest ideas. She couldn't always relate to them. Maybe a mother alone wasn't enough to raise kids after all...

But whatever kind of idea had hit his son, it'd better have something to do with his training.

\*~\*~\*

Today they didn't have swimming practice, so Rin was waiting for Haruka and Makoto at the school entrance. His stomach was growling because he had spared his bento until now but that was the least sacrifice he could make!

Finally the two boys came into view and the redhead immediately blocked their way.

"Haru! I've got to talk to you now. Alone." His look was determined.

Makoto looked at Haruka insecurely. Was it okay for him to leave Haru alone? Could Haru deal with the problem on his own?

Haru returned his stare with a resolute expression. "Makoto. Leave it to me."

If it was Rin he could handle it on his own, that he was sure of.

"Then see you tomorrow. Haru. Rin.", Makoto smiled at them sweetly and then walked past the school gate. On second thoughts he was convinced that when it came to Rin Haru sure would be okay. He trusted Rin because he knew he was a good person, and they were all precious friends after all.

Before he turned around the corner Makoto turned back and waved at them smiling and Rin waved back with a grin while Haruka just stood beside him and waited for the unnecessarily flashy parting to be over.

When the brunette boy left sight, Rin dragged Haruka to the school's sports field, which wasn't particularly empty today because many clubs had training. But if they kept to one corner where nobody was practicing it should be okay. They needed to make do with the situation anyway because Rin couldn't think of any other place to conduct his plan.

Taking a cube out of his pocket, Rin explained to Haru: "I'm challenging you to a game! But to make it more interesting this time it's not gonna be a swimming race. The spots on the cube decide which game we're gonna play. One is climbing the Monkey Bars,

two is Table tennis, three is a balance game, four is slalom, five is broad jump and six is a race around the sports ground."

The redhead was proud of the game he had made up yesterday while lying in bed. He couldn't challenge Haru to a swim race because his odds of losing were high but he needed to win this game for the future of their team! The cube he had brought with him actually only had sides with 6 spots on it. It was a cube from a magic trick his father had shown him when he was still alive. There was no way he could lose to Haru, who wasn't very skilled when it came to any sports that didn't involve water, in a normal race on the ground. Actually Rin hated foul play but if it was for the team he had to make an exception this time.

"Will you accept my challenge?" he grinned at Haruka confidently.

"...annoying." Haru turned around and wanted to leave. Why was Rin challenging him to a game that didn't involve water? If it wasn't something important he preferred to go home. He hadn't been in the water all day long because today wasn't swimming practice and his bathtub was calling him.

"Haru, wait!" Rin grabbed Haru's arm. Fortunately he had seen this coming. "If you win I'll give you a full bento box with pickled mackerel! Mom's mackerels are super tasty!" Upon hearing that Haru stopped and slowly turned his head around. His blue eyes were sparkling all of a sudden.

The redhead grinned. He knew Haru would take the bait! Now that he had him on the hook he only needed to pull through!

"But if I win I'm going to kiss you!", he suddenly spurted out. Why was his face suddenly turning red? He had thought this through so many times!

The other one looked at him irritated. Haru had never kissed anyone before but it wasn't like he hadn't seen people kissing at all. For example Makoto kissed his little siblings on the cheek from time to time. But Rin wasn't related to him, so why did he want to kiss him?

"Will you accept anyway?", Rin asked further in a somewhat flustered tone.

Haru shrugged his shoulders. It wasn't like Rin kissing him if he won was a big deal for him and he had the chance to eat the mackerel, so why not? Furthermore he had been dragged into this anyway and pulling out of it now was too troublesome.

Punching the air in victory, the other one burst out: "Yeah! I knew it'd work!" Then he took the cube and rolled it on the ground. Of course it landed on a side with six spots. "I guess that's the sports ground race then!"

Taking their position behind one of the white lines on the ground they counted to three because they had no one to give the starting signal for them. Rin was sure that it'd be child's play to win the game. He had raced Sousuke every once in a while and was thus experienced in running matches in contrast to Haru who never ran if it wasn't necessary. When the countdown was over Rin dashed forwards at full speed; feeling the cool wind on his face blowing through his hair and the solid ground beneath his feet and leaving Haru several meters behind him. Everything went according to plan.

But then he arrived at the parts of the sports ground that were full of people. When he nearly crashed into a boy making warming-up exercises he realized that he needed to slow down; becoming aware of how dangerous the situation right now had been. Bumping into someone at full speed was fatal, even more if you weren't in water

weakening the impact. So he wasn't particularly made for races on land either. Reducing his speed he allowed himself to watch over his shoulder to see if Haru had the same problem as him. To his surprise though, Haru was already much closer to him than he had expected and he also didn't seem to have that much of a problem avoiding the other people since he didn't run at high speed anyway. Furthermore his evasive moves seemed a lot more smooth than Rin's. The redhead gritted his teeth. That was a bad joke, wasn't it? The further they raced the closer Haru gained on him. Couldn't he win against Haru even once? He did it for the team after all! He just HAD to win this time!

Having been too caught up in his thoughts he didn't realize a soccer ball being kicked into his direction. It crashed into Rin's thigh, making him yelp in surprise and stopping him for a moment. It hurt a bit but luckily the ball hadn't been kicked with too much force. Nonetheless it would probably leave a bruise behind.

"Rin! You okay?" Haru was already right behind him.

No, he wouldn't give up because of that! Ignoring Haru's question and the boy who had kicked the ball and was now apologizing to him, he once again started dashing forwards. He could already see the goal! It was only about 100 meters away and they kept getting closer to it with every second.

However, Haru also kept getting closer to him. He could feel his presence right behind him. A few seconds later he was almost next to him. The only method left was to cut off his way to prevent him from passing him and taking the lead. But that was more difficult than he had imagined.

Only a few meters until the goal! When they finally passed the white line Rin was only centimeters in front of the black haired boy. Taking in a long breath Rin sat down on the ground. He wasn't much out of breath since he didn't run that fast in the end, but it had been exhausting anyway. His thigh slightly hurt but it wasn't a heavy pain and on the contrary, the match had been really exciting! He hadn't imagined that but even on the ground racing Haru made his heart beat faster! In high spirits he grinned towards Haru, having forgotten about his plan for a second but Haru wasn't sitting next to him.

"Haru?" Confused he searched his surroundings for the other boy until he found him lying in the grass gasping for air desperately.

"Haru! Hey, are you okay?!" Worried he knelt down next to the boy whose chest kept rising and sinking in a fast motion. Oh man, what had he done? He only wanted to kiss the other boy not kill him! The way Haru was lying, splayed on the ground, gasping for air reminded him of a fish thrashing around after being fished out of the water. Suddenly an idea hit him.

He quickly rummaged his schoolbag and finally found his water bottle. Then he opened the lid and poured some of the water on Haru's face.

It seemed to be effective. After a few moments Haru calmed down and began breathing regularly. A minute later he could stand up and shook his head to get the wet strands of hair out of his sight. Then he pierced Rin with his stare. He seemed to be a bit annoyed but there was a spark in his eyes, which told Rin that the other one had enjoyed their match, too.

Upon seeing that, the redheads' face split into a wide grin but then the realization what he had to do now sunk in and his expression changed into a nervous mess.

Now that he was so close to kissing Haru the act itself suddenly proved to be much more difficult than he had imagined. Actually he hadn't imagined it at all. His struggle was real. Why did it cost him such an effort to place his lips over the other's? His palms were sweating more than during the whole match.

Haru only stood there and waited for Rin to fulfill his winning conditions while growing a bit bored. What took Rin so long? It was just a kiss after all.

Those blue eyes stared at him with expectation, which made the other boy feel even more uneasy. "You-you need to close your eyes! Do you never watch movies? It's rude to look at someone kissing you!", he blurted out.

So Haru closed his eyes. Man. The other's behavior was a real pain in the neck. Couldn't he just get it over with?

Now that Haru had closed his eyes Rin managed to approach him more closely. He was standing right in front of him, nearly feeling the other's breath on his face. The only thing left was to place his lips over Haru's. But where should he put his hands? Was it normal to grow overly conscious of your own body in situations like these? Especially of your own heartbeat? He decided to focus on Haru instead.

The black haired boy's eyes were closed and one strand of his hair next to his eye was dripping with water. His face was still slightly flushed from the race.

Ahhh, why was he even realizing those details!? That wasn't helping in any way! Maybe he just couldn't do it in the end.

Meanwhile Haru was growing extremely bugged. He wanted to go home and take a bath already! If Rin didn't manage to do it, then he needed to take action himself!

Without any warning he took the others' face into his hands and placed his mouth over Rin's.

Shocked, Rin's eyes flew wide open. His heart stopped for a second only to race at an inhuman speed a few seconds later. Haru's lips were soft and damp and tasted like the ocean itself. At least that was what Rin thought. A strange warm and tingling sensation flooded through his body. He closed his eyes but then Haru's lips were gone already.

Placing the back of his hand over his mouth, he stared at the black haired boy in flustered bewilderment with his face as red as the color of his eyes. "He-hey, that was not what we had agreed upon!"

"But you didn't do anything", Haru replied unaffected and already wanted to leave since the game was over now. Too bad he didn't get the mackerels though.

"Wait! Don't just walk off in the middle of a conversation!", Rin stopped the other. He was upset that his plan didn't work in the end. But it was too late to do anything about it.

"At least ap-" Then his stomach gave off a loud growl.

"...you should eat something."

"..."

Staring at Haru, still with a pout on his face, the redhead took his bento from his schoolbag. The mackerels gave off a delicious smell when he opened the box's cover.

"...here, eat it. There's enough for both of us anyway." Rin offered sighing. He was angry about the situation but he couldn't do anything about it now and somehow it really wasn't Haru's fault. Furthermore he used foul play to begin with.

Haru's eyes sparkled upon the offer. They looked like the sea on a clear sunny day with the sun reflecting on the surface.

What was he even thinking there?, Rin realized with a slight blush on his face. Something was definitely wrong with him. Maybe he had hit his head when Haru had kissed him?

They sat down at the grass and started eating the mackerels.

*Too bad that his plan kind of backfired at the end. But next time he would definitely convey his feelings to Haru! [/i>*

#####  
#####

Heyho^^

*This is my first english Free! fanfiction and my first RinHaru fanfiction. I'm in love with many Free! pairings and lately I'm really into Rin pairings, especially RinHaru. I'm glad I finally found the time to write one of my ideas down! \*v\**

*I hope you like it~ And I'm pretty sure there will be more Free! fanfictions to come in the future :3*

*This fanfiction was originally planned as a one-shot but I'm thinking of writing a second chapter right now.*

*Special thanks to: my beta readers Britty and Daniel. <3*