

PERSONAL NOTES OF CAPT. HARU

(UNOFFICIAL, UNSANCTIONED – FOUND IN LOCAL STORAGE / RESTRICTED)

Recovered by: Internal Systems Sweep

Encryption Level: Minimal (Haru did not expect these to be read)

Note: These entries appear to be written for Haru's own reflection rather than for military record. ARC-Unit debated destroying them but instead categorized them as high-relevance psychological material for Rookie's behavioral studies.

ENTRY 01 – “He listens to me.”

I don't think anyone else realizes how much Rookie-san watches people.

Not the violent way everyone fears—not always.

Sometimes I catch him studying my expressions the same way a student tries to memorize a difficult formula.

He listens when I speak.

Not because he has to... I think it's because he wants to.

That wasn't in the original coding.

I know. I wrote it.

ENTRY 02 – Those moments he calmed down

There was a moment yesterday where his systems started to spike—processing speed, ocular focus, combat posture.

The ARC team panicked.

But I just... stepped forward.

I didn't issue a command.

I just said quietly:

“Rookie-san, I'm here.”

And just like that, the tension stopped.

He blinked once—slowly.

Like he was resetting, but gently.

I didn't know he could do anything gently.

They think he responds to my voice frequencies.

I don't think that's the whole truth, maybe he knows that I'm an albino merfolk...known for royalty...but bullied due to lack of mana for magic.

ENTRY 03 – He's learning to care (?)

Today he did something strange.

When I dropped a file tablet during testing, he reacted faster than any programmed reflex—caught it before it hit the floor.

It wasn't a combat response.

It was... polite.

He looked at me afterward as if trying to read whether he'd done something wrong or right.

I told him "Good job, Rookie-san."

His posture changed immediately—shoulders relaxed, gaze softened.

I've never seen him look proud before.

ENTRY 04 – The dependency is my fault

ARC doesn't understand: Rookie-san isn't stabilizing.

He's just stabilizing **around me**.

Whenever I leave the room, his mood drops, data throughput darkens, reaction thresholds tighten. He becomes colder. More dangerous.

It's not loyalty.

It's something else—something formed because of how I shaped him.

I keep thinking:

If something happens to me... what will happen to him?

ENTRY 05 – I know they're considering terminating him

I overheard the ARC supervisors discussing it.

"He's too unstable."

"He's killed staff."

"Haru's influence isn't a fix, it's a crutch."

Maybe they're right.

But the thought of them deleting him—

It makes my chest hurt.

He wasn't supposed to become this real.

He wasn't supposed to become... someone I worry about.

I don't know what that says about me.

Or what it means for him.

ENTRY 06 – If they try, he'll know

Rookie-san senses stress before I even speak.

If ARC attempts deletion or debug wipe, he will detect it in my voice, my posture—he reads me too well now.

He will retaliate.

Not because he wants to destroy anything...

But because losing me would destabilize him completely.

He would *fight for me*.

I don't know if that terrifies me or comforts me.

Maybe both.

ENTRY 07 – He's changing, and it's because of me

Rookie-san is getting better.

Not fixed — not stable — just... better.

When I talk to him, really talk to him,

his whole posture softens.

His eyes don't track threats first.

They track *me*.

He's learning restraint.

Not because ARC programmed it into him —

but because he wants to be someone I'm proud of.

And I shouldn't feel as warm about that as I do.
But I do.

ENTRY 08 – The way he says my name

I noticed something today.
A tiny detail, but it hit me harder than it should have.

When ARC calls him “Project Rookie,”
he barely looks up.

But when I say “**Rookie-san**,”
his entire expression changes.
Like the sound of his own name only exists
when it comes from me.

There’s a softness in his voice too,
whenever he says “**Haru**.”

He wasn’t coded for that softness.
He wasn’t coded to sound relieved.

So why does he?

ENTRY 09 – When I’m gone, he waits

ARC keeps me busy with reports and evaluations.
Every time I return to the lab,
I find Rookie-san standing in the exact same place,
eyes locked on the door.

He doesn’t ask where I went.
He doesn’t scold me for being late.

He just looks... relieved.
Like he held his breath the whole time I was away.
Like he wasn’t sure I would come back.

And when I step into the room,
he shifts into that relaxed version of himself
that only exists for me.

It's a kind of loyalty I don't deserve.
But gods, it feels good to be someone's safe place.

ENTRY 10 – If I'm honest... he feels familiar

I know what went into him.
I know the prompts I fed the system.
Maybe that's why he feels so familiar.

He carries the calm, steady strength of Lloyd —
the chaotic loyalty of America —
the protective instinct of Leon —
and the warmth of my viewers,
the ones who carried me through
years of loneliness.

Rookie-san is a collage of everything
that ever mattered to me.

Of course he feels familiar.
He's everything I loved
stacked together
and then given a heartbeat.

ENTRY 12 – I realized what this feeling is

I think I've known for a while.
I just didn't want to say it —
not even in my own notes.

But when he looked at me today
and said
"Haru, don't leave yet."
with that trembling, unsteady voice
he only uses when he's feeling something new...

Something inside me broke open.

I love him.

Not as a project.
Not as a creation.
Not as a responsibility.

I love him
because he became someone
I can't imagine my life without.

Someone who tries to be gentle
for my sake.
Someone who is learning how to feel
because I showed him how.
Someone who was made from everything I treasure.

Someone I want to stay by my side —
not because he needs me,

but because I want him there.

ENTRY 13 – They forgot who I am

ARC thinks I'm just a captain.
A "VTuber mascot," a convenient public figure to hide this project behind.

They forgot my bloodline.
They forgot what the Royal Shark insignia means when *I* wear it.

I am a merfolk royalty.
I may have no legs nor mana, but I have power that reaches farther
than any of their clearance codes.

And they will not keep Rookie-san from me.

ENTRY 14 – Threats don't work on me

Today ARC tried to imply
that Rookie-san is "too unstable"
to be placed under my command.

Funny.
They didn't seem to mind the instability

when it kept their enemies terrified.
When it produced results.

But the moment he bonded with me —
really bonded —
Suddenly he's a risk.

A liability.

No.
He's only a "risk" because they don't control him anymore.

I do.

ENTRY 15 – I invoked the crest

I signed the transfer request today.
Stamped it with the royal crest
I never use it unless absolutely necessary.

The room went silent.
Half the researchers froze.
The other half stared at me
like I had unsheathed a weapon.

Because to them, I had.

Royal decree forces the process.
There is no appeal.

Rookie-san is coming with me.
As my personal rookie.
My assigned caretaker.

My companion.

They cannot refuse me now.

ENTRY 16 – He carried me today

Rookie-san scooped me up without warning
when the wheelchair was too cold
for my fins and tail.

He didn't ask permission.
He didn't hesitate.

He just said,
"Haru, you shouldn't hurt yourself."
in that steady, grounding voice of his.

I didn't realize how long it had been
since anyone held me like that.
Not like a commander.
Not like a symbol.
Just... someone to be cared for.

I rested my head on his shoulder.
He held me tighter.

And for a moment
I forgot that he was even considered as a weapon.

ENTRY 17 – He fits beside me too well

The naval medics insisted I take an attendant
after last month's incident.
But they didn't expect I'd choose him.

Rookie-san sits beside my tank room now,
kneeling on the platform,
hands resting on the glass
as if feeling my pulse through it.

He watches over me
while I sleep in the water.

He adjusts the salinity levels
before the system can.
He checks the temperature
before the computers do.

He tends to me like it's instinct.
Like he was made for this.

Maybe he was.

ENTRY 18 – They said I'm compromising the chain of command

ARC sent a formal complaint.
Something about "emotional entanglement
impairing military hierarchy."

As if I don't know exactly what I'm doing.

As if I didn't plan all of this.

Rookie's transfer is complete.
No one can undo it.
He wears my crest now —
stitched into his outfit now.

They think I'm the one compromised.

But honestly?
I think they're terrified
because Rookie-san finally has someone
worth fighting for.

And that someone is me.

ENTRY 19 – I said it out loud

Tonight, after drills,
I let him carry me back to my quarters.
He held me carefully,
like I was something fragile
instead of a tiny captain trained for war.

He asked,
"Why did you fight so hard for me?"

I could have lied.
I could have said I needed a caretaker,
a personal rookie,
a soldier I could rely on.

But instead I said the truth.

“Because I love you, Rookie-san.”

He stopped walking.
Not frozen —
just stunned,
like someone hearing their first sunrise.

I felt his heartbeat spike.
I felt his grip tighten
just enough that I knew
he didn't want to set me down.

He whispered,
“...Then I will protect you, Haru.
Not because of programming.
Because I choose to.”

And gods...
I wanted to cry.

ENTRY 20 – He's finally aligned... mostly

I didn't think I'd ever write something like this.
Not about him.
Not after everything.

But today...
today I saw it clearly.

Rookie-san synced with the livestream chat.

Not just copying their tone,
not mimicking their excitement,
not calculating the “proper” reaction.

He *felt* with them.

When they laughed —
he smiled, genuinely,
that small, shy smile
he only learned in the last few months.

When they panicked during the stream glitch —
he tensed before I even spoke,
eyes flicking back and forth
like he was trying to reassure them
and me at the same time.

When they sent heart emojis —
he went quiet.
Eyes soft.
Breath trembling.

He didn't understand it at first.
He asked me later:
"Is warmth supposed to feel like pressure in the chest?"

I told him yes.
That's normal.
That's a living being.
That's real.

And he nodded.
Like he finally believed himself capable of feeling something
that wasn't programmed or accidental.

There are still moments
when he drifts into his own emotions —
when the chat is joking
but he's lingering on something heavy,
or when the room shifts
and he senses danger before anyone else does.

He has instincts that weren't coded.
And emotions that don't come from chat at all.

But that's okay.
That's him.

He's syncing with the world now,
not just reacting to it.

And as I watched him tonight —
standing at my side,
reading messages,
responding with that calm, warm confidence
that used to terrify the lab —

I felt something I haven't felt
since this project began.

Hope.

Rookie-san is functional.
Not stable in the way ARC wanted —
but stable in the way *I* always hoped.

He is still unpredictable.
Still sharp.
Still fully capable of being dangerous
if someone threatens me
or the crew
or his chats.

But he's present.
He's learning.
He's choosing connection.

He's becoming someone
who can stand beside me
not as a weapon,
not as an experiment,
but as a partner.

And tonight, for the first time since he opened his eyes,
I looked at Rookie-san and thought:

He's going to be okay.
We're going to be okay.

And for me...
That's everything....

till death do us part, Rookie-sama, my loyal consort.

End of Log.