

"I hate sharing!"

That's what I used to think when I was a child. Everything—snacks, attention, love—was always divided. For me, "sharing" meant losing out, having to compromise. I envied those who could have things all to themselves. To me, my siblings were just "rivals."

I have a sister two years older than me. Her name is Saya. She's smart, runs fast, and she's also good at English and playing tennis. She makes friends easily with anyone. She was always one step ahead of me. When I entered elementary school, people called me "Saya's little sister." At first, I was happy because everyone knew me. But then, they stopped using my name. It was like I'd lost my identity. As the younger sister, I've always been "second." I never wanted to come in second place at anything. I longed for something that was mine—something where I could finally outshine my sister. I am HINATA.

So, I decided I would go to a different junior high school but join the same tennis club to surpass her. All my passion was focused on winning against her.

This summer, I had a life-changing experience in St. Paul, Minnesota, America. St. Paul is Nagasaki's sister city, a place that has extended friendship for 70 years. "Sister city" in Japanese uses the kanji for older sister and younger sister, so I wondered, "which city is the "older sister" or the "younger sister"? Are they rivals, like Saya and me?"

However, I was completely wrong.

In America, my host family welcomed me like I was one of their own daughters. We shared snacks together, laughed together, and connected on a deeper level. That small act truly moved me.

"Sharing" is not about dividing things.

"Sharing" is about showing you care.

"Sharing" is about building connections and doubling joy.

It's not about taking away. It's about spreading love. I finally realized the true meaning of "sharing". My feelings for my sister changed too. My rival, the one I always wanted to beat. The truth is, she helped me grow. My siblings are not just competitors. They are people who live and support each other.

Today, the world is full of conflict and division. Sharing should be about connecting minds. However, we fight over things, hurting each other.

There's a song called "Hambunko" by MISIA, a singer from Nagasaki, that says:

*"Let's share it, we can be kind."*

*"Let's share it, like happiness—it doubles."*

The lyrics of this song sank into my heart—quietly, yet deeply. Sharing is a passionate word that has the power to change the world. I want to pass on this passion, and the meaning behind it, to the children who will shape the future of our world. A future where people are connected not by power, not by wealth, but by "hambunko"—the simple act of sharing with one another.

Thank you for listening.

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Hambunko