

## The Legend of Sampaguita

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A long time ago, there were neighboring Baranggays named Balintawak and Gagalangin. Between the two baranggay, is a very sturdy fence made up of dried bamboo. Every five years, they destroy it and build a new fence. Sometimes, the guardsmen from Balintawak watch over the fence, oftentimes the guardsmen from Gagalangin. Everything is working according to the rules of each datu.

The datu of Barangay Balintawak has a daughter with incomparable beauty and kindness. Her name is Rosita. Her mother died when she was young, however, she has four maids to assist her every need. There are a lot of handsome young men who admires her. But the only man who captured her heart is the son of Gagalangin's datu, whose name is Delfin.

The conflict between their parents did not stopped Delfin and Rosita from loving each other. At the end of the bamboo fence lies there secret lair. Every night when the moon is bright, they meet at the end of the fence and stroll along with Rosita's maids. Their relationship is hidden from both of their datu parents.

One day, the datu of Gagalangin heard that the fence is being destroyed by the servants of datu Balintawak so that they can build a new one. He asked one of his guards to watch at the said fence-making. When the guard came back, he told the datu that the new fence was moved. He was mad because the datu of Balintawak took five meters of their land. Immediately, he sent a man to the datu of the neighboring baranggay.

"Tell the datu of Balintawak to put the fence back where it is supposed to be. They are being unlawful and stealing one's land is a crime!" said the datu of Gagalangin.

When the datu of Balintawak heard about it, he became furious and asked the servant to give a message to their datu. "Tell your datu that I never stole anything from him. I just placed the bamboo fences at its right place according to the documents that I discovered, written by my ancestors."

Delfin's father was very much displeased with the other datu's response. This kind of conflicts usually results bloodshed among the two baranggays.

The datu of Gagalangin prepared his unit for the upcoming battle. He needs to get their baranggay's stolen land even by violent means. When the news reached the datu of Balintawak, he eagerly prepared his battle unit as well. The two leaders are now ready for a never-ending war.

A few days before Gagalangins planned to attack the Balintawak, the datu got sick. He became seriously ill that lead him to his death. The responsibility was then handed to Delfin. He will be the one to lead the battle troops of baranggay Gagalangin.

The female servants told Rosita what was about to happen and she started to become frightened. Delfin is so young and does not have any experience when it comes to war. His father, on the other hand, had been trained to fight since he was still a child. She worried too much. She wanted to talk to Delfin and ask him to forfeit the war and simply talk to his father and settle the conflict peacefully. However, they do not have time to converse anymore. Tomorrow is the start of an endless battle between the two baranggays.

Both parties lost so many lives. Delfin was badly hurt and shed a lot of blood. He started to be blurry. He was half conscious when he fell to the ground. Before his last breath, he told one of his comrades to bury him near the end of the fence where he and Rosita used to secretly see each other.

Nobody can ever tell what really happened to the young lovers or the result of the war. All they knew is that Rosita became seriously ill when she knew that Delfin died in the battle. Her father called for so many doctors to make her feel well but neither one of them can treat Rosita. When she was about to die, Rosita told her father to bury her near Delfin, at the end of the bamboo fence. Though it is hard for the datu to do, she still obeyed her daughter's last wish.

Many years had passed and the existence of baranggays gradually disappeared. Spaniards came and the city of Manila was established. Balintawak and Gagalangin became populated. But all the people living in these two places were having a mysterious experience. During the month of May, especially when the moon is bright, they hear a mystical sweet voice of a lady saying "Sumpa kita! ... Sumpa kita!" (I swear, I swear) but nobody can see from whom it is coming from. It seems as if it comes from the bushes where little white flowers grow. Although the flowers are so tiny, it bursts out a different kind of scent that everybody loves to smell. That's what usually happens every month of May, each year.

Because everyone was so curious about the voice, they all decided to dig up the spot and uncover the mystery behind it. To their surprise, they found the roots of the bushes where the lovely flower grows, comes from the mouth of the two bodies buried not so far from each other. The elders remembered the memoir of the two lovers - Delfin and Rosita.

The story spread fast. The words "Sumpa kita" evolved as "Sampaguita" that signifies an everlasting love of Delfin and Rosita.

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