

Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih

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Once upon a time, in a nice quiet village called Dadapan village, there lived a wealthy merchant. He lived with his one and only daughter who was named Bawang Putih. The merchant's wife passed away a long time ago. Bawang Putih was a really beautiful girl, she also was obedient and kind-hearted. That was why the merchant loved her so much.

On the other hand, in a small village not far from Dadapan village, there lived a mother and her daughter who was named Bawang Merah. These two people live a life full of simplicity after the death of Bawang Merah's father. But one day their lives changed, when a merchant from a neighboring village expressed his desire to marry Bawang Merah's mother.

The merchant brought them to his house in Dadapan to introduce them to his daughter. There when Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih met for the first time. Actually, these two girls were very happy with the marriage that happened. They both felt that their life would return to perfection because they finally had a complete family again. Also, now they will have a sister they can play with and chat with, so they won't be lonely anymore.

However, things turned out not the way they thought. When the attitude of Bawang Merah's mother changed every time the merchant went to trade. She would treat Bawang Putih like a servant. Bawang Merah knew the change of her mother. Her mother was a nice woman before but everything changed after she married the merchant. Bawang Merah repeatedly asked her mother not to treat Bawang Putih like that. But as an answer her mother always said "If you want to live happily for the rest of your life, just do what I tell you and never argue." That's why she couldn't do much about her mother's treatment of Bawang Putih because she was also afraid, and she didn't want to be a disobedient child, who disobeyed her mother's orders.

Everything became increasingly out of control after the father of Bawang Putih died of illness. Bawang Merah's mother increasingly treated Bawang Putih arbitrarily, she did not even hesitate to order Bawang Merah to do bad things to Bawang Putih. It's all just so that her mother can get all the inheritance left by the merchant. Bawang Merah was saddened by the change in her mother's attitude that became bad just because of her greed.

One day when Bawang Putih was ordered to wash clothes in the river, the mother ordered Bawang Merah to follow her and teased her.

"Follow your poor sister and do anything that can prevent her from coming home tonight," her mother ordered.

Bawang Merah refuted, "But mother it will be too much to do horrible things like that."

“A a a... don't even try to argue with me,” her mother said. “You are my beautiful daughter Bawang Merah, just do what your mother says!”

But again and again any resistance would never change her mother's mind, because her mother's order was an absolute thing. So with a heavy heart, Bawang Merah followed Bawang Putih. Arriving at the river, she saw Bawang Putih washing clothes while muttering, where in that distance Bawang Merah could still hear what the beautiful girl was saying.

“How sad my life would be, if only I had the strength to take my revenge on my mother and stepsisters,” she said.

Bawang Merah was surprised to hear that a good and innocent girl like Bawang Putih could think of such things as revenge. Her treatment of Bawang Putih must be so bad and cruel that it made her think like that. She was hesitant to carry out her mother's orders at that moment, but she would be in trouble if Bawang Putih came home tonight. So she decided to go to the Putih, acting as if she didn't care, she teased Bawang Putih until her mother's favorite orange shawl accidentally drifted away.

“Mom said all clothes must arrive at home, so good luck finding that orange scarf, Putih,” Bawang Merah said rudely. After that, Bawang Merah went home feeling uneasy and full of guilt. “Sorry Putih,” she muttered softly as she walked away.

Evening has started to come and Bawang Putih has not returned. Bawang Merah began to worry, she knew that she was the one who sent Bawang Putih to find her mother's scarf, but imagining a girl walking in the dark of course she was worried about her stepsister. So no matter the ego or the punishment she will get from her mother, she decides to look for Bawang Putih.

She sneaked out of the house secretly, hoping that her mother, who was busy counting money, wouldn't notice her gone. She returned to the river and started to walk through the river until she found an old cottage. Bawang Merah knocked on the cottage door hoping she could ask if the owner of the cottage knew where her stepsister was. An old woman opened the door and silently stared at Bawang Merah.

“Sorry if I am interrupted, I just want to ask if by chance you see a young girl passing by?” she asked.

Before the old woman could answer, a very familiar figure stood right behind her. Bawang Putih stood there, her face clearly surprised to see the presence of Bawang Merah.

“What are you doing here?” Bawang Putih shouted.

“I'm sorry, Putih. No matter how hard I try to pretend but in the end I do care about you. So let's go back home.”

"So now you act like you care about me?" that beautiful girl shouted angrily.

"I know what I did to you was cruel and it would be hard to forgive me. But I really can't fight mother, you know how horrible she is, but now I'm tired of pretending," Bawang Merah explained. "I know my mistake so can you forgive me?"

Bawang Putih looked thoughtful, her face looked like someone who had held a grudge for a long time, angry and sad at the same time. Seeing that, Bawang Merah realized she would not be so easily forgiven.

"You're both wrong young girls. What's wrong with forgiving each other," said the old woman suddenly. "I know how angry you are sweet Putih, but it's wrong if you think revenge will solve everything. And also you poor Merah, you should be able to choose between good and bad, not everything your mother tells you have to obey."

At that moment, Bawang Putih's face changed. Bawang Putih's face was no longer full of anger. She was aware of the bad intentions that she might do when she returned from this hut. Meanwhile, Bawang Merah still bowed her head full of guilt, she is increasingly aware of the mistakes she made

"Tonight if you weren't here I might have planned a bad revenge, Merah. But thanks for coming. I forgive you, after this let's fight mother together," Bawang Putih responded. Heard that Bawang Merah smiled brightly.

They hugged each other, and finally decided to return home. But before that the old woman gave them two pumpkins which would not rot.

"Keep these two pumpkins, they will never rot as long as you can maintain your good relationship," explained the old woman. "Make this pumpkin a symbol and a reminder of the closeness and strength of your relationship."

"Thank you so much," said Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih together.

They finally went home happily without any grudges and guilt. Even though when they got home, their mother was very angry, but this time things would be better. There will be no more pretending and injustice in that house. Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih will go through every trouble together.

Note:

I want to make a story about 'Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih' but from the Bawang Merah point of view. That this story will explain the reason why Bawang Merah is like an antagonist in the original story. I made this story based on an issue about **Authoritarian Parenting** (Manipulative and otoriter parents who make their children must always follow their words as a form of devotion.)