

# Spenser's "Like as a Ship"

It is an adaptation of Petrarch's "Rima "189, becomes sonnet 34 of Spenser's "Amoretti" ( a collection of poems written after his marriage to his second wife , Elizabeth Bolye at the age of 56).

# Spenser's "Like as a Ship"

It chronicles his courtship with his wife , Elizabeth . While •  
Petrarch wrote his sonnets about women he was never able  
to obtain, Spenser wrote about a single woman he did marry.  
Sonnet 34 , appears to describe a break in his relationship •  
with his wife and how he is left astray waiting for her  
forgiveness. Spenser uses the analogy of a ship losing its way,  
during a storm , to convey the separation between him and  
his wife.

# L 1-4

- A ship travelling through a large ocean , with no land in sight , uses the stars to guide her (personification ) , but when the stormy clouds block the star's light , the ship will be left astray.
- We learn that the thing , being compared to the ship , is the speaker ( the poet ). The ship , we are told , had been guided by a star until a storm ( argument ) developed. , blocking the ship's view of the star and leading the ship to wander far astray. To the speaker , she is the lodestar of his life , the fixed point by which the speaker is able to make sense of purpose in life. Astrology plays a big part in the poem and in navigation.
- The brightest star is the North star ; however , the poet is not referring to that star in this poem . Instead, he is referring to Ursa Major ( Great Bear )

# L 5- 8

Now, he wanders around in darkness because his guiding light •  
has been concealed by the dark clouds of the storm. Without  
her light , he is left vulnerable to the hidden changes round  
him . The storm has left the poet without his beloved to  
him. He misses her bright ray , personality , or guide  
soul . He Is consumed with sadness that he has lost his way ,  
and is left  
defenseless.

# L 9-12

Still, he hopes that when the storm passes , his beloved's light will shine on him again and guide him back to the port so that they could be together once again . He calls her Helice , also known as Callisto , a wood nymph turned into Ursa Major ( Myth).

# L 13-14

These last two lines are known as the rhyming couplet , which •  
sums up the entire poem in as few words as possible.  
Spenser is telling his beloved that until she forgives him , he  
will wander aimlessly all alone with sorrowful thoughts,