

# Magical and Realistic Elements in The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship

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Gabriel Garcia Marquez was born in a small Colombian town in 1928 and has written many short stories and novels over the years. One of his short stories, "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship", published in 1972, is in a book called *A Hammock Beneath the Mangoes* that was published in 1991. This was an interesting story and had many magical and realistic elements.

The main magical element in this story would be the ghost [ship](#), but many others exist, too. The things that the ship did were magical. Every March on one certain day, the ship would come, and it never made a sound, not even when it crashed. It always came at night and would disappear when the beam of the rotating light from the colonial city hit it. It followed a red lantern and turned into a real ship once it was away from the shoals where it crashed. The ship looked magical being described as "the largest ocean liner in this world...whiter than anything, twenty times taller than the steeple and some ninety-seven times longer than the village" (379). Another magical element was a [chair](#) that the main

[character](#)'s mom had, called "the murderous chair", "evil" or "the throne of misfortune" (376-377). It was called these names because, the main character's mom and four other women after her died in the chair the same way. When found, they were "still warm, but half rotted away as after a snake bite" (376).

The realistic elements were the small village where the main character lived and the people there. The larger colonial city on the other side of the bay and its "old slave port and rotating light" make the picture clearer so it seems more realistic (375). The bay, buoys, and harbo...

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...lieve that strange things do happen, but they are a little more realistic than these.

The many magical elements invade the realistic elements in this story. These elements make the story more interesting and make it challenging for the main character. He is misunderstood because no one will believe him about the ghost ship. The author seems to side with the main character and believes the ghost ship is real. The magical elements create many questions, and these cause me to believe that this story could never be real, even though I do believe that there could be ghosts. If a person will keep an open mind, he or she may find all kinds of things that will amaze himself or herself.

#### Work Cited

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship." A Hammock Beneath the Mangoes. Ed. Thomas Colchie. N. Y.: Plume Printing, 1991: 373-379.

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