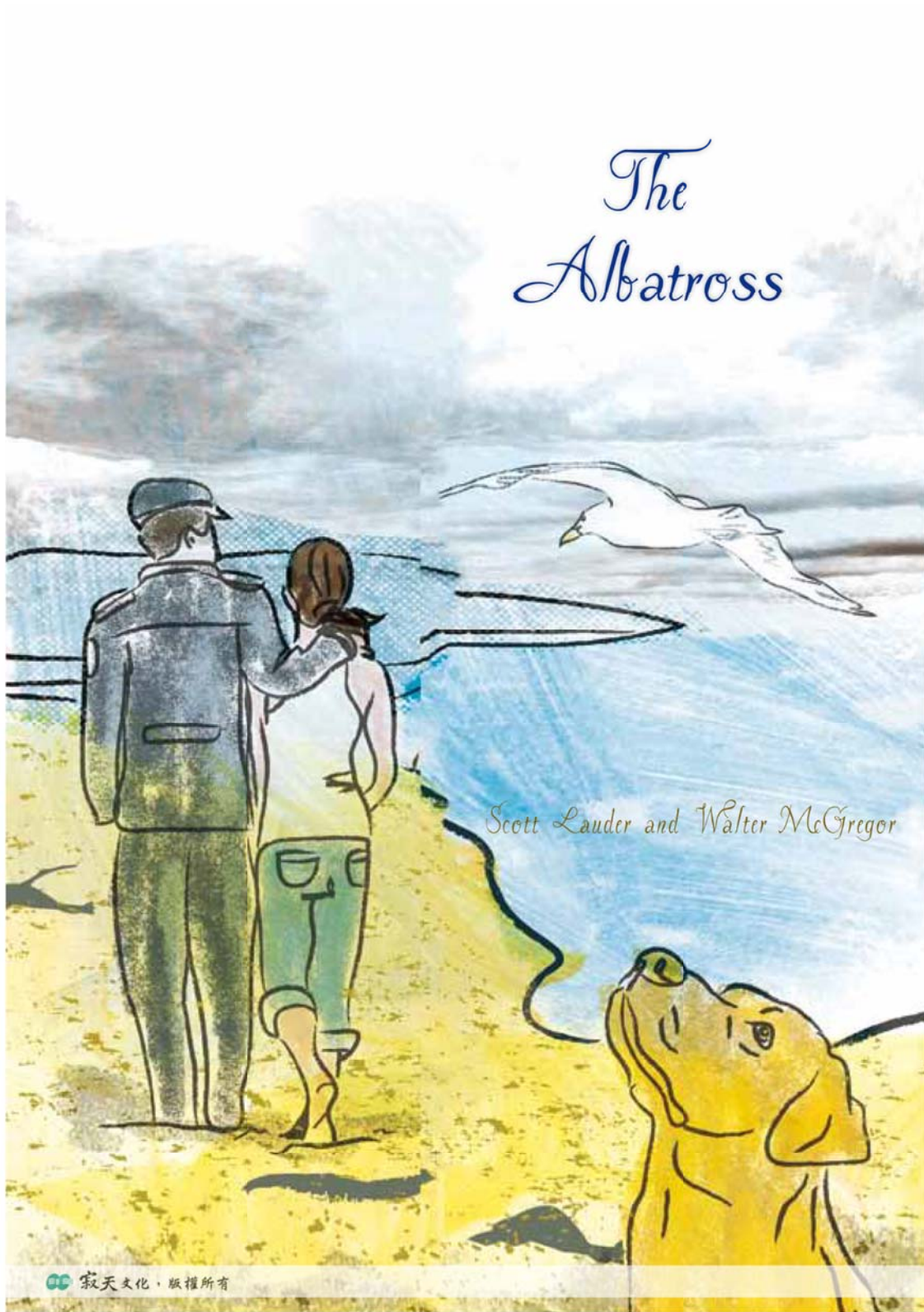





The Albatross

Scott Lauder and Walter McGregor



ABOUT THIS BOOK

For the Student

-  Listen to the story and do some activities on your Audio CD.
-  Talk about the story.
-  Prepare for Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET) for schools.

For the Teacher

 A state-of-the-art interactive learning environment with 1000s of free online self-correcting activities for your chosen readers.

Go to our Readers Resource site for information on using readers and downloadable Resource Sheets, photocopiable Worksheets, and Tapescripts.

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For lots of great ideas on using Graded Readers consult [Reading Matters](#), the Teacher's Guide to using Helbling Readers.

Level 5 Structures

Modal verb would	Non-defining relative clauses
I'd love to . . .	Present perfect continuous
Future continuous	Used to / would
Present perfect future	Used to / used to doing
Reported speech / verbs / questions	Second conditional
Past perfect	Expressing wishes and regrets
Defining relative clauses	

Structures from other levels are also included.

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MEET THE AUTHORS

Can you tell us a little about yourselves?

Scott I am doing a doctorate¹ in Education, so I don't get much time for hobbies. However, I do like to read fiction. At the moment, I am reading Patrick O'Brian. He wrote twenty-one books about Captain Aubrey, but I wish there were more.



Scott

Walter I love writing short stories, but my business keeps me very busy. I live in Scotland and I work there, too, so I often go hill-walking. My other hobbies are playing guitar and sketching².

How did you two meet?

Walter We met at primary school many years ago!

Have you written together before?

Scott Yes! We've written more than twenty stories so far.

1 **doctorate**: highest qualification from a university

2 **sketching**: drawing

3 **UAE**: United Arab Emirates

How does writing a book together work?

Walter Usually, one of us will have an idea and then we will talk about it. Because Scott lives in the UAE³ and I am in Scotland, we chat on the computer a lot!



Does the book have a message?

Scott I think the book is partly about grief⁴. When someone important in our lives dies, we have to remember that person, but we also have to move forward.

Where did you get the idea for this story?

Walter Scott and I were sitting in a café next to the ocean. It was a cold, wet, windy night. As we looked out of the café's window, we saw the lights of a boat in the Firth of Clyde⁵. What was the boat carrying, we wondered⁶ . . .

Any more stories in the future?

Scott **Walter** Lots!


⁴ **grief**: sadness when someone dies

⁵ **Firth of Clyde**: area of ocean on the southwest coast of Scotland

⁶ **wondered**: asked ourselves

1

“But that’s impossible”

 *The Albatross* wasn't the most beautiful ship in the world, but Leveros Andreas didn't care. He was the ship's engineer¹ and everybody knew him as Levy. At sixty-five and after almost fifty years at sea, this was his final voyage. He couldn't wait to retire² and use the money he had saved to buy a house in his home town of Nikiti, in Greece.

He and the other two members of the crew³ were sailing toward the harbor town of Haven with their cargo⁴ of televisions. This was Levy's first time on *The Albatross*, but not his first time to visit Haven. Years before, when his wife was still alive, he had visited the little harbor town on the east coast of the United States with her. Those were happy years.

Levy looked at the gold watch that his wife had given him for his 40th birthday. “1:14!” he said.

Usually, he tried to be in bed by twelve; but Herman, the ship's cat, was missing.

1 **engineer**: (here) person who works with engines

2 **retire**: stop working because he is old

3 **crew**: people who work on a ship

4 **cargo**: things that a ship carries



There was a storm coming and he was worried. "I'll murder that cat when I find him!" he said, shaking his head.

There was only one more place to check: the cargo deck¹. He began climbing down the stairs to the lowest deck. He had almost reached² the bottom step when he stopped. There, in front of him, the door to the cargo room lay³ half open. It was dark inside. Normally, the door was locked for security⁴ reasons. Levy thought about going to tell the captain immediately, but then he thought about Herman.

"Hermaaaan! Hey, Hermaaaan," Levy called from the door of the hold⁵. "Are you in there?"

He pulled out his flashlight. "Hermaaaan!" Levy called again.

The flashlight shined only a few feet through the door and into the darkness, but Levy didn't really want to go any farther. The truth was he was frightened of rats. This was one of the reasons why he liked Herman.

Levy stood still. The ship was beginning to rise and fall more quickly now: the storm was getting closer.

"Herrrrr-maaaaaan, where are you?" Levy called out.

The captain's orders were that no one was allowed to go into the cargo hold but Levy had to find Herman. Hesitantly⁶, Levy stepped⁷ forward but he touched something with his foot. He jumped back and looked down. An apple core⁸ lay at his feet. At least it wasn't a rat.



"But that's impossible" (1)



"Andre!" thought Levy.

Andre was always leaving these things lying around. He pictured Andre's face. "Large" and "stupid" were the words that immediately came into his mind. Andre and his friend, Carlos, were his two crewmates⁹. Although it wasn't easy on a small ship, Levy tried to stay away from them as much as possible.

"I should get out of here," he thought. "That crazy cat will have to find his own way out: I need to go and tell the captain about this door."

"Kkkkeeeeeeeeeew!" The sound came from somewhere in the darkness.

"Keeeeeew! Keeeeeew!"

The sound

- What do YOU think makes this sound?

"What was that?" he whispered to himself.

He shined his flashlight into the darkness and moved toward the sound. The sound came again, only louder.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 deck: area or level on a ship | 6 hesitantly: nervously; anxiously |
| 2 reached: arrived at | 7 stepped: moved |
| 3 lay: (here) was; remained | 8 core: center |
| 4 security: safety | 9 crewmates: people who work on the same ship |
| 5 hold: large area for cargo | |

6 Hundreds of boxes were piled high¹ on both sides of him; but there was a clear path² through them, like a river through a canyon. Levy's mouth fell open. At the far end of the hold, a light came from a half-open door.

"But that's impossible," he said. "There are no other rooms in the cargo hold."

But there was another room and there was another light and it was drawing Levy forward like a moth³ toward a lamp.

