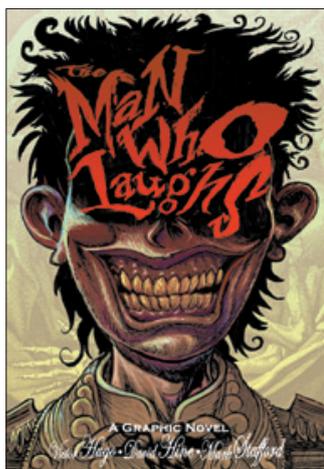


# The Man Who Laughs



From the writer of *Les Misérables*, the classic novel that inspired the creation of The Joker.

Victor Hugo's scathing indictment of the injustice and inequality within Britain's political system tells a story of abduction, mutilation, loss and prejudice. David Hine and Mark Stafford have produced a gripping adaptation that captures the macabre social satire of the original novel.

Set in 18th-century England, Gwynplaine is the two-year-old heir to a rebel lord, who is abducted upon the orders of a vindictive monarch, who has him mutilated (to produce a permanent, grisly smile), then abandoned. After years of living frugally he is re-introduced to the aristocratic life, and resolves to become the voice of the voiceless, whether he is heard or not.



Hugo wrote *The Man Who Laughs* while in exile on the Channel Islands. Hugo's influence can be found in the works of other great 19th-century European novelists such as Dickens and Dostoyevsky. The book has been celebrated in film and theatre, but most prominently, *Batman* creator Bob Kane found inspiration for the Joker's look and Brian Bolland equally considered the silent film adaptation ideal source material for his own rendition in *Batman: The Killing Joke*.

#### About the adaptor:

**David Hine** has worked in comics since the 1980s, and has written for DC (*Batman: Detective Comics*, *Arkham Unhinged*; *Deathstroke: Faces of Evil*), Marvel (*Spider-man Noir*, *X-Men*, *Silent War*), and 2000 AD (*Tao De Moto*). It was during his work on *Batman* that he discovered the appearance of the Joker was based upon Gwynplaine's likeness in the 1928 silent film adaptation of *The Man Who Laughs*.

#### About the Artist:

**Mark Stafford** is a cartoonist in residence at London's Cartoon Museum. He has collaborated with Costa Award-winning creator Bryan Talbot on the *Cherubs!* graphic novels, painting deadhillbillies and writing about cinema for *Electric Sheep* magazine. Stafford previously collaborated with Hine on "The Colour Out of Space" for SelfMadeHero's critically acclaimed *Lovecraft Anthology Vol. 1*.

#### About the Original Author:

**Victor Hugo** was one of the most prominent French writers and political figures of the 19th century. Known for his most famous works *Les Misérables* and *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, he is also considered by some to be the greatest French poet. A staunch republican, Hugo lived much of his life in exile.



#### Notes to editors

SelfMadeHero aims to publish works that provoke, entertain, inspire, and inform through the medium of the graphic novel. We are proud to publish ground-breaking and beautiful work by authors and artists from across the globe, from the quirky and humorous to the political and profound.

PUBLISHED IN PAPERBACK APRIL 2013 | ISBN 978-1-906838-58-4 | 160PP COLOUR | £14.99

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