

Falling Night by Phil Clarke

Author long biography



Philip Clarke was born in Cornwall in 1967 to a British father and a Danish mother. After an early childhood in Singapore and Hong Kong, he was brought up in the UK and educated at state schools in Somerset, UK, followed by the universities of Birmingham and York, where he gained Masters degrees in Engineering and in Ecology.

After university, he volunteered on an expedition to study Tanzania's tropical dry forests, and then worked as a camp leader before being promoted to coordinator for the research program. In the process, he learned the natural history of these forests in sufficient detail to co-author and co-edit the book *Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa* that was published by IUCN in 2000. He also wrote many scientific papers about these forests, and rediscovered the tree *Karomia gigas* that was thought to have gone extinct.

While in Tanzania, Phil met a team from the French aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and then joined the organisation as a logistician. He was posted to Somalia in 1994, and then to Rwanda, Zaire/DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Lebanon. In 1998, he became the executive director of the Danish branch of MSF, a post that he held for almost nine years.

In 2006, during his last year with MSF, Phil founded a war crimes investigation agency, Bloodhound, and asked a satellite analyst to document the massive displacement of civilians from an oil concession in South Sudan that belonged to a Swedish company, Lundin. This information was presented together with a list of recorded attacks that had happened in that oil field to a Dutch organisation ECOS, who then published the report *Unpaid Debt* in June 2010, which exposed how Lundin made 93 million USD profit at the alleged cost of 12,000 dead and 160,000 dispossessed Sudanese civilians. Two weeks later, the Swedish State Prosecutor for International War Crimes launched a decade-long criminal investigation that has resulted in an 80,000+ page indictment against the company's bosses. They were brought to trial on the 5th September 2023 for complicity in war crimes; the court case will run for 2.5 years and will be the largest in Swedish history. It is the first time anywhere in the world that a major company is being prosecuted for such crimes since the conviction of Nazi industrialists at Nuremberg in 1948.

Phil fictionalised the experiences that led him to switch from disaster relief to war crimes in his debut novel *Falling Night* that was published by Ambassador International in June 2023. It is one of the few aid worker novels ever released in English by a professional publisher.

Phil continues to direct Bloodhound, and helps run a small agricultural development project in Ethiopia as a board member of the charity Carrot Aid. He also worked with expedition logistics during 2008-2014 for a mineral exploration company in Greenland and Denmark, and is an elder of a church in the Christiania commune in Copenhagen.

For more information about Phil's novel *Falling Night*, go to <https://fallingnight.clarke.dk>