

Biographical Fragments of the Life of Julian Prince

Jake Kerr

Julian Prince

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Julian Samuel Prince (March 18, 1989 – August 20, 2057) was an American novelist, essayist, journalist, and political activist. His best works are widely considered to be the **post-Impact** novels *The Grey Sunset (2027)* and *Rhythms of Decline (2029)*, both of which won the **Pulitzer Prize**. He was awarded the **Nobel Prize for Literature** in 2031.

Prince was a pioneer of **Impact Nihilism**, a genre that embraced themes of helplessness and inevitable death in the aftermath of the **Meyer Impact**. His travelogue, *Journey Into Hopelessness (2026)* outlined Prince's return to North America, ostensibly to survey the damage to his home state of Texas. The book's bleak and powerful language of loss and devastation influenced musicians, artists, and writers worldwide, giving voice to the genre as a counter to the rising wave of **New Optimism**, which sprang out of the European Union as a response to the Meyer Impact and the enormous loss of life.^{[1][2]}

Early Life

Not much is known of Prince's early life. He spoke rarely of his childhood, and with the loss of life and destruction of records during the Meyer Impact, little source material remains. What is known is that Prince was an only child, the son of Margaret Prince (maiden name unknown) and Samuel Prince. He was born in Lawton, Oklahoma, but moved to Dallas, Texas, when he was eight years old.^[3] In an interview before his death, Prince noted:

I was a good kid, a boring kid. I didn't cause trouble, and trouble didn't find me. I studied hard and planned on being a journalist, figuring that I was better at observing the world than shaping it. I graduated high school, and continued with my journalism classes via the net. Up until the Impact, I was thoroughly and utterly average.^[4]

Upon earning a bachelor's degree from [Khan University](#) in journalism, Prince embarked on a career as a web reporter.^[5]

Excerpt from Julian Prince's Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, 2031

So it is that life, to which we all cling with desperation and joy, prevails. Yet I cannot let go of the memories, the experiences, and the physical reality of those that have passed

away. The ghosts are all around us, even as we squint to see through them. It has been said that I deny optimism and ignore our future, but that is not true. It is just that I refuse to let the difficult questions remain unasked. I refuse to conveniently ignore the graveyard that is now half our planet. And I refuse to feel joy that so many have lived when so many—so many—have died.

It is with humility that I accept this award, not for myself, but for the hundreds of millions who are not here with us today. I did my best to tell their story, but they deserve so much more than I can possibly give. If I achieved even a small part in doing so, I am glad.

Pre-Impact Career

Prince spent the decade before the Meyer Impact crossing the globe courtesy of a series of freelance journalism jobs. His first writing job was with [AOL Local/Patch](#) in 2010, where he aggregated [citizen journalism](#) stories from North Texas and rewrote them for syndicated release to the net. He continued to work for AOL Local for seven years, until he quit in 2017. ^[6] He wrote about this transition in an essay on the carefree lives of the pre-Impact world in 2031:

I quit because I wasn't excited. Can you imagine such a thing today? To leave security and stability because your life just isn't dangerous or crazy or exciting enough? Such

was the innocence before the Impact. So I left the boring to move to Africa, where the excitement was, and where I could write about things that shed light on life and death, not ennui or entertainment.^[7]

Prince took a job with European news agency [Star News](#) in 2017. His writing up until the Impact in 2023 was spare and fact-driven, although flashes of Prince’s eye for emotion could occasionally be seen. Prince would say of those years, “Everything I wrote back then was worthless, but it was also worth everything—because it was the mind-numbing limitation of facts and cold description that allowed me to view the Impact in its true light.”^{[8][9]}

Excerpt from “Maldives’ Last Grain of Sand,” reported by Julian Prince (*Star News*, 2018)

Ahmed Manik sits in a rickety wooden boat, watching as a wave crests over a strip of sand. Manik is the grandson of Maldives’ last President, Mohammed Manik, and the strip of sand is all that’s left of the island country of Maldives, a country wiped away by global warming, rising water levels, and decades of mismanagement. Scientists don’t even bother estimating how long this last remnant of the former island nation will remain before it is washed away. It may be weeks, perhaps even days.

Manik shrugs when asked about the lost legacy of his family and former country. “We are all grains of sand, just waiting to be washed away,” he says and smiles, which accentuates the heavy creases around his eyes and mouth. He may have accepted the inevitable force of the rising waters, but it has taken a toll.

Impact Year

Prince was already in Africa during the six-month preparation for the Impact and thus didn’t have to take part in the [Expatriation Lottery](#). He wrote many news articles during this time, but no fiction or essays. There is no record of Prince’s life for the 18 months following the Impact and the immediate global environmental catastrophe it caused. Prince would write about this time often, but never about his own life—only what he had seen. ^[citation needed]

Excerpt from “Immigration Concerns Dominate South African Presidential Debate,” reported by Julian Prince (*Star News*, 2023)

Cheers followed South African presidential candidate Maxwell Mahlangu on each stop of his tour of the country, despite deep concerns that his endorsement of the United Nations Emergency Emigration Plan for North America would upset the entire framework of the country. “Our