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Leading Russian Blogger Dies at 30 After Public Battle With Cancer

By Allison Quinn

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Top Russian blogger Anton Buslov died in New York on Wednesday at the age of 30 following a long and public battle with Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Buslov, an astrophysicist by trade, made waves in the Russian blogosphere after he was diagnosed with the illness in 2011. He was outspoken in his criticism of Russia's health care system, even penning an open letter to Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets in June, challenging her praise for Russian cancer treatment options and slamming disparaging remarks she had made earlier of Russians seeking treatment abroad.

Buslov was initially treated for his illness in Russia, but after he was given a prognosis of two years, he decided to seek treatment at an oncological center in New York.

Thousands of people donated money to the cause, which is thought to have bought him more time, but ultimately there were complications due to chemotherapy, according to his

LiveJournal blog.

"One hour ago, around 8 p.m. Moscow time, Anton Buslov passed away. He had been writing his journal since November 2012. But he couldn't write the last issue: his brother Dmitry wrote it for him. We were waiting for his column and last journal entry, which we are preparing right now. We knew that it would be a farewell column. He didn't have time to write it," read a statement published on the website of The New Times.

Through the course of his fight with the disease, he wrote a regular column for The New Times and maintained a strong presence in the Russian blogosphere, by means of which he kept supporters updated on his battle.

His last Twitter message, published on Sunday, made clear his knowledge that time was running out. "The doctors said I'll die within several days, next week. I will try to write on LiveJournal in time," he wrote.

A longer message published on Facebook that day evidenced an unflinching attitude toward death. "Dear friends! It's me. I have news: there is a 99 percent chance that by next week, I will be in the cold twilight of a morgue. And in one week, in the bright, hot flames of a crematorium. Masha [his wife, Maria Nechayeva] and I had wanted to have two kids by next summer. Thank you for all the support that you gave me. Without it, this would've been much more difficult. ... With friends like this it is still possible to think of the future," Buslov wrote.

Soon after his death on Wednesday, Twitter was flooded with warm words from other bloggers who knew Buslov.

"Anton was one of the strongest and most dignified people I've ever known. I always thought he would beat it. ... Anybody else would've given up long ago, but Anton continued to work even despite the disease. Up until the very end," popular blogger Ilya Varlamov wrote on Wednesday.

"Anton is gone, but he left us the history of his battle with cancer, which will help thousands of other people. He taught us not to give up and not to despair even in the most hopeless situations," Varlamov wrote.

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Contact the author at a.quinn@imedia.ru

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