

Stephen Robertson

Plague

(It has been suggested that areas with outbreaks of Ebola should be sealed off.)

In some far-off place we know but little
across so many alien lands and seas
some people have some nasty new disease.
They seem to want our help, but they can whistle
as well for wind: we care not a tittle.
Many die—thus limiting their needs.
This time, the bug's not spread by rats and fleas
but by their piss and snot and sweat and spittle.

Oh, people spread! Quick, guys, an ecstasy of fumbling,
building the clumsy barriers just in time
to keep the carriers of plague at bay.
Yet someone here is staggering and stumbling—
how in hell did he evade the line?
Oh bugger! Now *we* have to get away.