

STUART BARNES

Cocoon

In the brown paper
bag on our coffee
table's trussed
nothing so thrilling as

liquor, pornography

but Monstres of
tablets – sixty
white Nevirapine,
thirty blue Truvada
– stigmatised

\$271.58, \$765.10,
respectively.

“Thank God we
don't live in

America –”
“Africa.”

“People ... dying
of *this*. And for me,
free.” Childproof caps,
stubborn silver seals
and cotton wool.

Боже мой! Beguiling
matryoshkas.

Tumblers
of cranberry.

“A toast

– to the new
me.” Soon you
are cocooned also –
in a blanket:
Lufthansa, feather
grey, spark retardant.

Nevertheless, chemicals
nettle cells, innards simmer.

Δ

Morning:
olive eyes
have clouded;

you try a little
toast “butter to the edges”,
Vegemite; ground

bitter
beans make you retch.

Into

my bed you
stumble, cooling
slender, pale limbs in sea

green sheets.

Even so, sweats,
threshing, ululation:
limbo's pitchforks.

Hooded Crow,
from my wooden
desk, I

watch. Say, what's
the use in swaddling?
When

will this be finished?

Le Monstre: Canada's largest wooden roller coaster

Боже мой!: Russian, "O my God!"

Nevirapine, Truvada: combination therapy HIV antiretrovirals