

# The Greatest Living Englishman

David Sylvian

Here we are then, here we are  
Notes from a suicide  
And he will never ever be  
The greatest living Englishman

It's such a melancholy blue  
Or a grey of no significance  
Plastic coated surfaces  
A space to place his suitcase  
As he's bussed from A to B

But it's such a melancholy blue  
The curtains round the bed are drawn  
Broadcast voices from the ward  
The humming of machines are heard  
But there are distances between  
Yes, there are distances between

His aspirations visited him nightly  
And amounted to so little  
Too much self in his writing  
Now he will never ever be  
The greatest living Englishman

The engine shifts into second gear  
They're all aboard accounted for  
It's a journey he must make alone  
The black sheep boy is leaving home

It's been rehearsed a thousand times or more  
He's well prepared of that he's sure

But still it's such a melancholy blue  
He's erased a page of history  
Much as he'd intended to

He wouldn't speak or show you he was happy  
Though you'd meet him with your eyes  
There was a wall that always stood between you  
He'd shut himself outside

And the love that he engendered  
Would never be enough  
For him to feel alive  
Warm and tender  
He'd shut himself outside

Not a fake nor a sham  
But dug in deep and fighting  
The world could not embrace a man  
With so much self in his writing

Well he was never gonna be  
The greatest living Englishman  
He had ideas above his station  
Minor virtues go unmentioned

Little England, you fit like a straightjacket  
Hemmed by the genius of others  
He said "to conquer the world is not to leave a trace  
Remove even the shadow of the memory of your face"

A grey of no significance