

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