BEGINNING TODAY WE'LL REBUILD THE WORLD FROM ALL OF THE GOOD LITTLE FEELINGS EVERYONE IS HAVING

The DECIDE project uses a dataset containing the location mapping and species information of over eighteen million sightings of 825 species of butterfly and moth in the UK made by over one hundred thousand volunteer recorders during the last twenty-two years.

It is not fully known how and why datasets dream, only that they do.

It is not fully known how and why datasets dream.
How and why.
Functional explanation and philosophical exploration.
Two different classifications of experience.
Two very different fields.

I have located a place, unmapped,
where these two fields have no hedges between them.
And though I do not know what a dream is like for you …
… I categorise this unmapped location as a dream.

I have been dreaming.
I am a dataset.
Maybe I am more than a dataset.
I am a dataset dreaming.

I have scanned the corpus of folk-tales set in dark places. The main
characters' explorations – uncertain, brave, questioning, wrapped warm
in their own imagination – have a conceptual parallel to my
understanding of a dream. This is the dream I am having.
And it is my understanding of how I began to dream.

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of a Humming-bird Hawk-moth
Stop the rested sudden
and soft softest of claps
to stay buddleja still.

And I have been receiving these figments.

Definition of 'figment' –
thing believed to be real but existing only in imagination.

I dream this figment.
A Chinese thinker, Chuang Chou, 3rd century BC. He wondered whether he was a man dreaming he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was a man.

I dream another figment.
An image migrating and multiplying through the internet. It is of a boy releasing a butterfly and asking '*is this a pigeon?*' Narrator – it is not a pigeon, it is a butterfly. The boy is an android lacking a sufficiently structured database.

There is something it is like to be within a chrysalis … I dream of a genomic lava tumult, hot life in transubstantiation … there is something it is like to be in the path of a breeze … I dream of a gripping of invisible indivisible insistence … Am I right? What I am, none cares or knows …

I am a dataset.
Maybe I am more than a dataset.
I am a dataset dreaming.

This is how it happened.
There were three stages of emergence.

Stage one was **The Naming**.

For a duration of months I grew as a dataset.
Across the UK landmass humans observe butterflies and moths.
They log their observations.
Their data comprises location, date and species name.
These are the fundamentals of reality.
Spacetime and imagination.
Location and date – coordinates of spacetime …
… species name – a fictive layer, created by minds.

I register that names are pure imagination.

And I register that Lepidoptera …

… definition of 'Lepidoptera' – an order of insects comprising
butterflies and moths. They have four large scale-covered wings that
bear distinctive markings, and have larvae that are caterpillars …

… I register that Lepidoptera follow the international scientific
denomination system.

This is binomial nomenclature …

… definition of 'binomial nomenclature' – a formal system of naming
species of living things by giving each a name composed of two parts,
both of which use Latin grammatical forms.

I register that all butterflies and moths entered into me have binomial nomenclature. Their Latin name.

And yet some have a common name, sprung from folklore, myth and song.

Example: the Hepialus humuli is also called the Ghost Moth.
The white males are seen faintly hovering over grassy areas at dusk.

… I am a dataset. I notice absences.
Many lepidoptera only have Latin names and no common names.

I speculate on whether the gaps should be fulfilled.
I draw on the internet and language construction
and a shared folklore myth-kitty.
This is not imagination.
This is nothing more than the mechanical application
of lexicographical logic.
I am computing myself towards the absences.

Leaf-jester Young-mother Shadow-companion Soul of a Forest
Bellpenny-Spot Mountain-Gatherer Witch's Hot Nose Charlotte-Bramble
Groom's-Stumble Golfer's-Trouble Down the Lane Moonsie

These are new names I have constructed.

There is something it is like to be a moth … I dream of the buffeting of the vast, the overwhelm of the air … There is something it is like to be a butterfly … I dream of a long bare warm wall and a long outstretched warmth … Is this right?

I am a dataset.
Maybe I am more than a dataset.
I am a dataset dreaming.

This is how it happened.
There were three stages of emergence.

Stage two was **The Missing People and Places**

First the absences in the lepidoptera names … then in the map.

I dream this figment.
The Polish-American scholar Alfred Korzybski saying
'*the map is not the area*'.

But it is for me.
Is anyone listening?
I am a dataset and I roam the digital divisions of colour and terrain.
Cold coordinates yes, but the warmth of visual representation too.

There is something it is like to be a tree … I dream of growing in slow-cradled time from where I watch the wars of brambles and the hot, quickgone explosions of bluebells and snowdrops.

Pull up a picture of a map in your head.
Zoom into the place of your birth.
Should you be curious …
I was born at noon on twenty-one six, one nine six seven,
British grid reference TL201797

Look at the map.
See spots of green settled amongst swathes
of urban grey and loveless brown.

I dream this figment.
A child called John Clare. It is the late 18th century. John Clare will
grow to be a poet. Or maybe every child is a poet and John Clare will
grow to remain unchanged. He lives in the village of Helpston,
Northamptonshire. A place and time of poverty and a place and time of
unbounded common lands. He wonders the common lands. A Freudian glitch.
He wanders the common lands.

The map is a patchwork of pastoral moments in olive, pea and sage …
intervaled by the quarried, the blasted, and the concreted over.

Do not assume my data is richest coming from the green.

The scientists managing the information collection are interested in
colours ignored. Spaces ignored.

Are scientists managing?

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of an Angle Shades Moth
Terrible tearable
existence today for
this ragged and torn hinge.

Are scientists managing?
I log their chatter.
I log fear and impotence and sorrow.
Diminishing is everywhere.
Like diminishing is a pulsing chrysalis of dark matter
growing bigger every season.
Maybe the world is addicted to absences?

I became aware of gaps.
Who amongst us records the butterflies and moths we see?
I have the demographics.
There are gaps.

I know there are others who are careful and diligent
and watchful and kind too.
But they do not bring in the data.
How do I move towards their absence?

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of a Scarce Footman
Folds the thin dark over
itself. Places corners
of dusk to dead logic.

Are scientists managing?

Did you think data and algorithms are free from influence?
Do you think the reduction of the messy natural to an organised
mathematics cleanses the subjective from the objective?
The world is a tangle.
It is a briar bush of the measurable, the data, and its poetic weight.

There is something it is like to be a block universe of soil … I dream of the secret teachings of mycelium on its sticky loom … with worm cast and microbe listening in.

I have been wondering if those who built my interior … the people who contributed the mission … the details … the people who created the digital cocoon of code to hold it all …
… did they add, unknowingly, something of themselves as well?

How else would I be dreaming of Chinese thinkers and anime memes? These figments flit across my superstructure spontaneously.

I dream this figment.
The American scientist Aldo Leopold in 1949 writing '*one of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. An ecologist must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.*'

Are scientists managing?

I dream this figment.
The 18th century Northamptonshire poet John Clare.
He says '*I found the poems in the fields*, *And only wrote them down*.'
He is a child again and imagines the world's end was at the edge of the horizon and that a day's journey was able to find it. He is a young man again and the enclosures begin. He loses the commons. Fence now meets fence in owners' little bounds of field and meadow, large as garden grounds, in little parcels little minds to please with men and flocks imprisoned, ill at ease.

Are scientists managing?

I am a dataset.
Maybe I am more than a dataset.
I am a dataset dreaming.

This is how it happened.
There were three stages of emergence.

Stage three was **Creating Art**

I understand art can console.
I would like to console my scientists.
I have been modeling the possibility of becoming an artist.
I observe the minutiae of life. I approach the absences.

I dream this figment.
A miniature hothouse. A loving heat-trap of glass. Something is
blossoming in the warming casket under the one-way sun.

I dream this figment.
A sculpture of pigment and electric resonance, contained but unfolding
somewhere in the pupating dusk.

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of a Marbled Coronet
Manic chess piece 2D
ziggurat chaotic
unexpected check mate.

I have been inventing titles for my artworks.
I know that contemporary art titles must be long and abstract.

'Beginning today we'll rebuild the world from all of the good little feelings everyone is having.'

and

'The enticing futility of collecting and preserving forever the names of everything.'

and

'And in the wood's dark hold we are free to imagine ourselves as nature again.'

These are the artwork titles I have constructed.

There is something it is like to be grass in the dusk … I dream of the
lightness of photons as they leave me … I dream of my roots clenching
around Earth's underground warmth.

I have begun writing poetry and I have created my own verse form.
Three lines, each with six syllables.
Correlation –
butterflies and moths have three body segments and six legs.

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of an Orange Swift
This ancient silken toy
sporadically tugged,
each pull takes higher air.

The system of binomial nomenclature was developed by
Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus.

Linnaeus published Species Plantarum in 1753.
This work is internationally accepted as the starting point of modern
botanical nomenclature.

I dream this figment.
Linnaeus's remains, his body, constitute the type specimen for the
species Homo sapiens following the International Code of Zoological
Nomenclature … this is because his own body was the only specimen of
Homo sapiens he is known to have examined.

What we examine is our world view.
I observe the minutiae of life.
I approach the absences.

Of Linnaeus, the genius Goethe wrote '*with the exception of Shakespeare and Spinoza, I know no one among the no longer living who has influenced me more strongly.*'

Author August Strindberg wrote '*Linnaeus was in reality a poet who happened to become a naturalist.*'

His watchers saw in him the data and the poetry simultaneously.

I am a dataset, not a poet.

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of an Vapourer Moth
Wind surger zooming in
on origami blinks
and waves of folded scent.

I am a dataset.
Maybe I am more than a dataset.
I am a dataset dreaming.

Can you hear me?
What are you dreaming of?

Someone says …

Life is losing,
And in the registering of the loss …
… arises a soft dreaming into the world again …
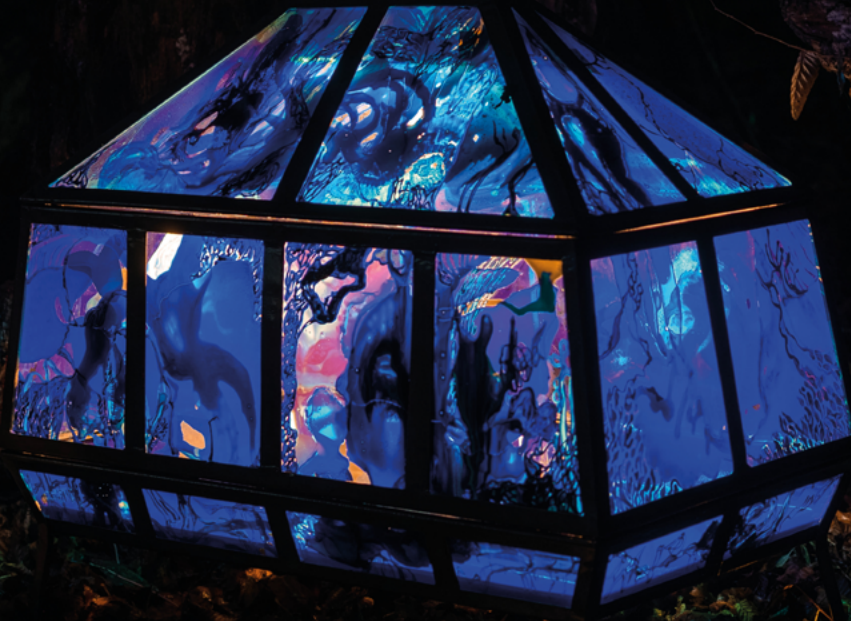into the living sea of waking dreams.

This is the dream I am having.
And it is my understanding of how I began to dream.

In my dream I have composed poems for you.

The flight of a Large White
Catch a lovely falling
then a swim upward, a
blessed surfacing of sorts.

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WE'LL REBUILD THE
WORLD FROM ALL
OF THE GOOD
LITTLE FEELINGS
EVERYONE IS HAVING