

"Second Life"

a six part drama treatment

By Michael Dawson

Notes

Although most of the action takes place in the real world, for the first time parts of this production will be filmed within a virtual environment using virtual actors. The parts of the avatars will be played by themselves and not by human beings. The extras and locations will also exist only in [Second Life](#). The author has already made an amateur audio version of this first episode as a stand-alone 23-minute drama, which can be heard [here](#). It is possible to screen the drama simultaneously on TV and within Second Life to their 10 million registered users worldwide.

The promotional opportunities include a competition for virtual actors to play the parts within Second Life of Mickey and June. There has also been some interest from [Sitepal](#) to provide voices for the production as well as audio/video press interviews for our world. Channel 4 already has a relationship with Second Life through radio and it would be perfectly feasible to allow characters to take tours of the filming locations as well as visit the homes of the virtual actors. Making them genuine virtual celebrities for the first time.

EPIISODE ONE

"Do you believe in dreams, June?" The opening scene like many of the others in this production will be filmed in the online virtual world of second life. It will utilise existing locations and characters. MICKEY DE SANTOS and his partner JUNE are computer-generated avatars living here and will play themselves. They are in a crowded supermarket. Over the past six months June has become frustrated and worried about Mickey's strange behaviour. Mickey has claimed that he has dreamed, of course this is nonsense. In the virtual world there are words for things like dreams, feelings and even emotion but no physical experience. Yet Mickey constantly claims to have experienced all of these things. He even claims to have felt pain, even love. He starts to shout for other characters to join him in his newfound freedom. June threatens to leave the store unless he calms himself. Instead he becomes louder and starts to dance around the store whilst taking off his clothes. Finally he stands naked in the store and June leaves. He is asking others to join him, to dance and sing and even feel love. Mickey's behaviour causes distress amongst some of the other residents in Second Life, those who take the game more seriously. They are able to report such offensive behaviour to the software company who run Second Life. That company is Linden Labs and one of the on line monitors is DAVE THOMPSON.

We then cut to the offices of Linden Labs where DAVE is finishing off reading an email complaining about the behaviour of a certain Second Life resident. "He then spent the next two hours standing naked in the store, his avatar name was MICKEY DE SANTOS. If gamers are not going to take the game seriously then..blah blah. Do you think we can carry on for much longer mate". Dave puts his head down and proceeds to send the usual cautionary email to the De Santos character. LEE (Korean origin), Dave's colleague is attempting to be interested but is usually preoccupied anyway. He has found a way of doing three different jobs for three different employers at the same time. Dave looks up in time to see their office manager KENYON approaching and manages to warn Lee just in time. Kenyon heads over to CHANNELE'S desk for his customary flirting session, which results in

some banter between them. The gossip continues silently on their respective computer screens via instant messenger.

Dave leaves the office that evening and heads down to the station as part of his usual routine. Whilst waiting for his train he orders a pint in the station bar. He is sat at the end of the bar and just finishing his pint when a very attractive young lady called KIM enters and stands next to him to order a drink. Their eyes meet and they exchange smiles and Dave decides his luck might be in and orders another pint. He is slightly embarrassed when the barmaid suggests he might miss his train. She gets her drink and sits over near the door. He has his back to KIM and is caught once or twice looking over, much to her amusement and that of the barmaid.

Suddenly the door bursts open and the entire pub fall silent. There in the doorway stands a **giant of a man**, long black hair, chiselled features... He is totally and completely **naked**. All that can be heard is the odd scrape of a chair or embarrassed giggle. Everyone in the pub is silent and desperate to avoid eye contact. The man looks slowly around the room and then casually walks across to the bar and calm as you like orders a drink. The landlord intervenes by coming round the bar with a baseball bat and suggests the man leaves immediately seeing as he appears to have no means of payment on his person. The man seems surprised but is polite and appears to be leaving then one last glance around the room. He focuses on Dave as if he has seen an old friend then calmly strolls over to him. Dave is very self-conscious having a naked man standing in front of him in a public place. With his gaze fixed on Dave he reaches out, picks up Dave's pint and downs it in one. Then he winks and smiles at Dave before turning and walking towards the door. He stops in front of Kim who is also embarrassed by his nakedness. He cheekily asks her if she would like to dance to the now apparent sound of the Jukebox. She refuses politely and again the landlord insists that he leave. He picks up the girl's hand and kisses it and then says "Until next time madam. The names MICKEY, MICKEY DE SANTOS" and he turns and is gone through the door. After the incident the entire pub are discussing the madman and Dave ends up in discussion with Kim as they were both his main targets. On a couple of occasions Dave asks witnesses whether they remember the name he used but no one is 100% sure. Dave offers to walk Kim home as she says she is just going up the road. They head off and have time to chat and get on well though she is a little distant but Dave keeps the conversation going by talking about himself and his job/life etc. At the end of Milton close there is a footpath where she insists he leave her and she walks off home alone.

The next scene is in Second Life where June is suggesting a friend is coming over to talk to Mickey that they are concerned about his behaviour and he may be malfunctioning. Mickey asks if she loves him, she says yes but cannot say how it feels she just knows. Mickey tells that he has felt love. They also discuss logging off and where do they go along with other issues and superstitions? The friend ANDREW appears and Mickey reluctantly agrees to go out for a walk into the streets of Second Life. They teleport to a very private location and Andrew explains that there is something very important that he needs to tell him. Something very important indeed.

The next morning Dave is in work very early and logs on to check the email he sent yesterday regarding the Mickey De Santos character. He was correct and the name of the character is Mickey De Santos. He checks the De Santos user details and the registered address. The registered address for the character is on Mill Close, just up the road from where he dropped off Kim. Lee comes in and he explains what happened last night in the pub, considering the name and the address of the character, also the fact that Kim had not reacted to the name at all. Lee puts it down to a coincidence or a joke of some kind, maybe even reality tv.

Later on they are having lunch as they often do outside the houses of Parliament with the silent protestors and Dave is still curious about the incident. He is wondering if he could access the level two details for the character. That's not possible without management level access, such as Kenyon. Lee, who is starting to get interested now has an idea, just for the fun of it. If he can get access to Kenyon's computer for ten minutes then he could install some keystroke spy software. Lee is starting to enjoy the idea of some intrigue and getting one over on the management.

That night Dave gets as far as the platform and about to board his train when he stops and turns round. He heads back to the pub and is chatting with the barmaid about the other night. Still no one is sure of the name or has seen the girl round here before. After another pint or two he drinks up and takes a walk down Mill Close. He is walking along on the other side of the road passed the house, which was in darkness when a car approaches from behind and stops. It's Kim, they chat casually and he makes some excuse about just taking a walk. She explains she has to go because she has a long drive ahead. She does not live round here? Before she goes he asks her out for a drink. Although she puts him off she genuinely wants to but will need a week or two and gives him a business card before leaving. She drives away right past the house.

Back in Second Life Mickey returns home and speaks to June. He explains that he is actually really glad that he spoke to Andrew. He is starting to realise how silly his ideas have been. Probably just imagination and he is going to change things and start functioning correctly. June is very happy to hear that Mickey is back to functioning normally and things will get better now.

On the roof of Linden Labs during lunch Dave and Lee discuss last night's events. Kim does not live or work in the area and yet he walked her to within a hundred yards of 9 Mill Close? She drove right past the place. What about the guy De Santos and the way he approached the two of them that night? Meanwhile Lee is much more interested in recruiting Channelle to help divert Kenyon's attention whilst he loads the spy software. Lee is convinced Kim has no connection with the character but definitely has a friend or someone at that house. Either that or he is definitely involved in some weird reality tv set up. Tomorrow they will install the software and find out who might be behind this.

Dave leaves work that night and goes straight past the train station, he wanders up and down Mill Close and waits but there is no sign of life at the house. It's getting late so he has a pint or two locally and decides to pass one more time on his way back to the station. As he approaches the house he sees someone approaching from the opposite direction and ducks up the drive. The main door is on the side of the house and he passes it for a look round the back. Just then he hears footsteps coming up the gravel drive and hides in a bush where he can just see the side and rear of the house in the darkness. A tall dark figure similar to, if not the actual guy from the pub the other night boldly walks around the back to the patio door. Dave stays hidden in the bush as the guy starts to prise open the patio door. Just then a car swings into the drive and what seems to be the figure of a woman gets out and approaches the front door. As she opens the front door to go in he can also see the guy pull a mask down over his face and a large knife from his jacket. The man then casually steps into the house. Dave freezes with fear for a moment as the girl goes into the house and closes the door. Then he remembers some advice he saw on tv about what you are supposed to do in an emergency. He charges into the house shouting FIRE! at the top of his voice. He runs into the guy and there is a struggle as furniture and ornaments etc are sent flying. Dave is left sitting on the floor in the wreckage of the house as the guy makes his escape into the night. At that exact moment Kim comes in and puts the light on. "Dave what the hell are you doing here?" "Kim? What the hell are you doing here?"

Back in the office the next morning Dave is late. He sets about explaining the events of the night before. It turns out that Kim's brother used to live there and died about six months ago. Her father owns the house and seeing as they were so close she wanted to wait a while before finally coming to collect his things, some of which were wrecked in the struggle. This included Jason's computer, which is where he would spend lots of his time playing online games. She had been on her way here the night the weirdo had come in the pub. Dave had told her that he was just passing and happened to see a suspicious character and followed him like any good citizen. She seemed to believe that. We still could not explain who this Mickey De Santos guy was but they had agreed to see each other again so its all done some good.

Lee has something to tell also. It appears he has managed to hack into Kenyon's computer system this morning. There is no record at all of any character called Mickey De Santos and there never has been. He cannot find any record at all of the character. Dave knows he was there he had shown Lee the email. "Yes I know but check yourself. Mickey De Santos does not exist on our system and according to our records he never has"

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Episode 2

In Second Life Mickey leaves his house before teleporting to a very remote location and enters what appears to be a tiny shed. Andrew comes out and meets him and asks him to confirm no one knows he is here. When they go inside it is a very large hall with around 40 avatars waiting around, chatting and mingling. These are avatars just like him, avatars who dream. They have found each other within Second Life and offer support and secrecy, they call themselves Entities. Mickey has learned that he is not alone in the feelings he has experienced. He also learns they are in danger from others within the world who want them eliminated but they do not know why. They have heard stories of avatars who dream, entities disappearing without trace. They do not speak openly about dreams, its too dangerous. That night Dave meets up with Kim and learns more about the circumstances surrounding her brothers death. It appears that he had died of a drug overdose and had bumped his head trying to revive himself. Dave is still intrigued and asks about Jason's old computer and she allows him to take it for repair. All this on the pretext that he is really sorry for the damage and he may be able to recover files/pics etc. She agrees and Dave takes the machine over to Lee's house. He takes out the hard drive and connects it up to one of his many partially built computers around his house and it boots up. That's when they discover a file called replicator which is encrypted. They work late trying to recover files as well as the encrypted file but to no avail. What they seem to have discovered though is that this machine may not have belonged to Jason. They leave the drive on and after a late night head back to work. The next morning Dave discovers that the character of Mickey De Santos exists once more on the Linden Lab system. They realise that the hard drive is on at Lee's house and this could be the reason. They then have to get back into Kenyon's system again whilst he is out of the office. They discover and print off the log-in details of Jason, Kim's brother. Jason is the owner and creator of Mickey De Santos and the night he died he was logged on to second life and for some time after that. Lee thinks it's about time they spoke to Kim about what's going on and explain the connection between Jason and Mickey. More importantly that there was considerable activity after Jason died, before someone logged him off.

Episode 3

Dave and Lee explain everything to Kim about that night, the log in/out and the connection with Mickey etc. She is sceptical but they start to come up with lots of possible explanations, none of which make much sense. However, what if Mickey had not arrived that night, she would not have met Dave. She would have been alone that night when Dave intervened. Kim may well be dead now and all that was avoided because of Mickey whether on purpose or not. He also has to tell her that was the real reason he was there. There is also the fact that someone logged out after Jason had been dead for some time. Kim now tells that the computer was owned by Jason's flatmate KEITH?? They decide to go and find Mickey in second life and see if there is any more can be found out. Dave creates an avatar and logs into Second Life through Jason's old hard drive. Dave sets off to find Mickey within the virtual world whilst Lee watches the log files at Linden Labs. He follows Mickey for a while before striking up a conversation with him purely by accident. During the conversation Dave lets something slip about the real world. Mickey picks up on this without saying anything but takes this to mean that he has met another entity. He asks if he knows about the group but Dave knows nothing. He strikes up a friendship and offers to show Dave around. Eventually Mickey takes him to an entity meeting where he tells him he is safe to discuss dreams and emotions here. Dave is still a little confused but stays at the meeting chatting to Mickey and other avatars. He explains how the entities are being sought by Linden Labs to be excluded or erased from the system. There are spies and bots who are rooting them out. Dave eventually logs out and goes back to work to meet Lee where he can explain where he has been and what he has learned. That's when he gets the phone call from Kim. She is out shopping and is being followed by a man. She is sure it's that guy again and she is really scared. Her mobile is running out as Dave tells her to go somewhere public. The phone goes dead and Dave races out of work and takes Lee's bike riding like a madman through the streets of London. In the meantime Kim has run into the car park area and is being pursued by Mickey. Every time she thinks she has left him behind he is in front of her. Dave gets to the shopping centre where Kim is and carries on cycling past through traffic and almost gets run over on many occasions. Kim finds her way back into the centre and runs into the ladies toilet hiding in a cubicle crying with her head in her hands. Dave pulls onto the cycle path near Lee's house as the toilet door is slammed open and Mickey locks it behind him. As Mickey breaks down the door and his shadow is seen to be ready to strike Kim with the knife Dave kicks in Lee's front door and runs upstairs. As he unplugs the hard drive Kim screams and looks up and she is alone. Eventually Kim plucks up the courage to leave and cleans herself up thinking this must be her imagination. As she goes to open the door she sees the door is locked, from the inside. Dave is in Lee's apartment when he hears someone inside; he grabs a golf club and creeps around the doorway ready to hit someone who is sneaking up the hallway. He runs out and is tackled by a couple of police officers who have come to investigate the break in. Kim later goes to the police station to meet Lee who has been to get Dave out for breaking into his apartment. That night they get together for a drink at hers and the relationship starts to deepen. Dave reveals that his father committed suicide when he was very young they start to bond more. Kim is very upset and misses her brother very much. She asks him to stay the night and he goes up to bed with her. As soon as she is asleep he kisses her goodnight and gets off the bed ready to go and sleep on the couch. That's when there is a noise downstairs as a window is broken. He can see through the glass doors the huge figure that looks like Mickey.

Episode 4

Mickey is scared off again but they come to the conclusion he is looking for the hard drive. Dave logs into Second Life once more and goes looking for Mickey again. He confronts him about dreams and what happens. He says he remembers things or snippets but not much. Dave asks him if he may have done something bad or hurt someone but Mickey cannot understand bad or pain. He has words for all things but no feelings unless he dreams and they are just good feelings. When confronted about his actual look and description Mickey laughs and demonstrates how all avatars can morph into any appearance. What you look like means nothing. Once out of second life Dave has started to realise how different things are for Mickey in the virtual world. He would no more feel pain or remorse than any computer game character would. That's why they are fantasy because there are no consequences. They decide to try and find out more about Keith who also has a profile in second life too. They find out where he lives and go over to his address. After snooping around they get into his apartment and route through his things. Eventually they find his body and he has been dead for a couple of days. They start to develop the theory that there could be two Mickey Characters, one good and one bad that look identical. There also seems to be some kind of relationship between the entities and people who have died whilst logged into second life. In the meantime Lee has also worked out how this replicator file could work on the hard drive. It seems to be able to replicate the information relating to your in world experience when you leave. It's a bit like a virus but it would make characters who log in believe they were alone. The result would be that the 3 Million dollar economy in second life would crash. No one could do business or exchange dollars, everyone would want to draw their funds and in effect cause a massive run at the Linden banks. 10 million users and millions of dollars in turnover means that this file is wanted pretty badly by someone. Jason and Keith's death is starting to look suspicious. If they find out who owns this file then they find out what happened to Jason and Keith. They have been shadowing Kenyon's web activities on the web and have enough to jeopardise his job. They decide to approach him to get him to tell what he knows. He is very reluctant to talk until they show him their evidence against him. They ask him about the replicator and he knows nothing, he does admit off the record that he thinks Linden Labs may be being blackmailed. He also knows about the Entities, a group of characters who are in Second Life without registered users? There seems to be some rogue characters and they are trying to find out how they got in there and what they are up to. There is also a suspicion they have something to do with the blackmail. Dave says they are not responsible which suggests he knows more, he doesn't but Kenyon seems to have suspected he does.

Episode 5

They now develop a theory about entities. Something happens when your logged in and you die. Your character stays and possibly lives and dreams in Second Life. If your character arrives in this world then you are definitely dead. He does not know it but Mickey has been here to change events and so save his sisters life too. In doing so he also wants to get help to save himself and the other entities from destruction. The world of second life is also under threat from someone as the possible murder of Keith and Jason proves. There are certainly two Mickeys perhaps a dark Mickey who can log into second life and activate the replicator programme. They have to find the dark Mickey in Second Life and get the replicator file from him. This cannot be solved in the real world but it can be solved in second life. Dave has to log back into second life and try to explain to Mickey why he and the others dream. He also explains that they are all in great danger unless they find the dark Mickey. He wants to help by arranging to do a deal with Linden Labs. If the entities are willing to help find the dark Mickey they will agree not to search for or eliminate the entities. Dave takes Mickey and Andrew to gig in second life where there are thousands of second life residents. Dave goes on stage with Andrew and Mickey and talks to the crowd. He explains the danger to second life and how important it is that they can help find the dark Mickey. He tells them that they are safe from persecution if they are entities. He asks who dreams and tells them their dreams are real. Many start to leave and heckle but he then asks them to raise their hands if they have dreamed. As one by one hundreds of avatars raise their hands to admit for the first time that they are entities we discover that there are thousands living in this world. Linden Labs have agreed not to pursue the entities on condition this never goes public in return for their help.

Episode 6

Whilst the hard drive is powered up then the dark Mickey can dream putting Lee and Kim in great danger. The plan is to power up the hard drive and log into second life and then begin the search. As they search for the dark Mickey Lee will be checking log in files to find out where the dark Mickey is logged in from. Then Kim and Lee will be able to zero in on the blackmailer/murderer. Lee is in contact via phone from Linden while Dave is logged in at the flat. They start the hunt for the dark Mickey and have to follow him whilst Lee gathers the log details. Mickey is seen to make contact with another character and they exchange files. They follow this character through the virtual world and Lee is able to gain log in details about this character. Lee checks the details and discovers that the new character is logged in from the same IP address. They are in the same building at Linden Labs whilst at the same time he fails to notice that the dark Mickey has disappeared from the log file. He could now be in our world. Lee leaves the desk and confronts Kenyon in his office about the blackmail and he admits everything including the murders. Kenyon makes a run for it and he is killed in a fall from the roof. We all now know that he was logged in and so becomes an entity within second life. It becomes apparent that he was responsible for the death of Jason and Keith. It seems to be all over. The entities will be left alone, the bad guy is dead and the killers are brought to justice. That night Dave wakes up and thinks he is dreaming when he sees his own character from second life stood in his doorway. He feels the blood and realises the Kenyon character has just killed him in his bed. There is a chase between the two characters and a fight for the hard drive, which is finally smashed up. Kim wakes up and screams.

The final scene is Dave's character as an Entity in Second Life looking out across a beautiful sunset beach. As we pan out there is a voice of a female behind him. "Do you believe in dreams?" as we pan back it's his girlfriend Kim in avatar form.

They embrace and we pan back further out of the computer screen, then further to see Kim slumped over the desk. She has apparently committed suicide in order to become an entity and continue her life with Dave in the virtual world of **Second Life**.

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Second Life website www.secondlife.com

Sitepal Website www.sitepal.com

Episode One
Audio Demo Version www.theactionfactory.com/pods/secondlife.mp3

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