Well, It Turns Out That Lonelygirl Really Wasn’t

A nearly four-month-old Internet drama in which the cryptic video musings of a fresh-faced teenager became the obsession of millions of devotees — themselves divided over the very authenticity of the videos, or who was behind them or why — appears to be in its final act.

The woman who plays Lonelygirl15 on the video-sharing site YouTube.com has been identified as Jessica Rose, a 20-ish resident of New Zealand and Los Angeles and a graduate of the New York Film Academy. And the whole project appears to be the early serialized version of what eventually will become a movie.

Matt Foremski, the 18-year-old son of Tom Foremski, a reporter for the blog Silicon Valley Watcher, was the first to disinter a trove of photographs of the familiar-looking actress, who portrayed the character named Bree in the videos. The episodes suggested Bree was the home-schooled daughter of strictly religious parents who was able to find the time to upload video blogs of her innermost thoughts.

The discovery and the swift and subsequent revelation of other details surrounding the perpetrators of the videos and the fake fan site that accompanied it are bringing to an end one of the Internet’s more elaborately constructed mysteries. The fans’ disbelief in Lonelygirl15 was not willingly suspended, but rather teased and toyed with.

Whether they will embrace the project as a new narrative form, condemn it or simply walk away remains to be seen.

The masterminds of the Lonelygirl15 videos are Ramesh Flinders, left, and Miles Beckett, Lonelygirl15 directors, with Jessica Rose and her co-star “Daniel” in a photo released after the truth came out.

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his photographs of Ms. Rose as proof of his involvement in the Lonelygirl15 videos. He had been hired to take the pictures on the set at the start of shooting.

The series, which Mr. Flinders and Mr. Beckett plan to continue on a site overseen by them, may play differently with fans now that they know for sure that Bree is an actress. Part of the appeal of the series was that the serious-minded, literate Bree offered an unbeatable fantasy: a beautiful girl who techy guys had something in common with.

On learning that Ms. Rose was an actress whose interests, unlike the scientific and religious issues that fascinated Bree, ran to parties and posing, one fan wrote, “Very cute, but she’s really not into Feynmann and Jared Diamond! (I’m heart-broken ...But a wonderful actress, had me fooled into thinking she was a geek like me.)”