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Computer After too long on the Net, even a phone call can be a shock. My boyfriends Liverpudlian accent suddenly becomes indecipherable after the clarity of his words on screen. a secretarys tone seems more rejecting than Id imagined it would be. Time itself becomes fluid - hours become minutes, and alternately seconds stretch into days. Weekends, once a highlight of my week, and now just two ordinary days. For the last three years, since I stopped working as a producer for Charlie Rose, I have done much of my work as a telecommuter. I submit articles and edit them via E-mail and communicate with colleagues on Internet mailing lists. My boyfriend lives in England, so much of our relationship is computer-mediated. If I desired, I could stay inside for weeks without wanting anything. I can order food, and manage my money, love and work. In fact, at times I have spent as long as three weeks alone at home, going out only to get mail and buy newspapers and groceries. I watched most of the blizzard of 96 on TV. But after a while, life itself begins to feel unreal. I start to feel as though Ive merged with my machines, taking data in, spitting them back out, just another node on the Net. Others on line report the same symptoms. We start to strongly dislike the outside forms of socializing. Its like attending an A. A. meeting in a bar with everyone holding a half-sipped drink. We have become the Net opponents.

worst nightmare. What first seemed like a luxury, crawling from bed to computer, not worrying about hair, and clothes and face, has become an avoidance, a lack of discipline. And once you start replacing real human contact with cyber-interaction, coming back out of the cave can be quite difficult. At times, I turn on the television and just leave it to chatter in the background, something that I'd never done previously. The voices of the programs soothe me, but then I'm jarred by the commercials. I find myself sucked in by soap operas, or compulsively needing to keep up with the latest news and the weather. "Dateline," "Frontline," "Nightline," CNN, New York 1, every possible angle of every story over and over and over, even when they are of no possible use to me. Work moves from foreground to background.

练习 : 1. Compared to the clear words of her boyfriend on screen, his accent becomes A) unidentifiable. B) unbearable. C) unreal. D) misleading. 2. The passage implies that the author and her boyfriend live in A) different cities in England. B) different countries. C) the same city. D) the same country. 3. What is the main idea of the last paragraph? A) she is so absorbed in the TV programs that she often forgets her work. B) In order to keep up with the latest news and the weather, she watches TV a lot. C) In order to get some comfort from TV programs she, sometimes, turns on the television. D) Having worked on the computer for too long, she became a bit odd. 4. What is the author's attitude to the computer? A) She dislikes it because TV is more attractive. B) She dislikes it because it cuts off her relation with the outside world. C) She has become bored with it. D) She likes it because it is very convenient. 5.

The phrase "coming back out of the cave" in the fifth paragraph means A) coming back home. B) going back home. C) living a luxurious life. D) restoring direct human contact. Keys : ABC~~C~~D

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