Going Places

Summary PDF and revision sheet · Class 12 English Core, Flamingo Chapter 8 (CBSE and RBSE) · A. R. Barton

LitGram

In one line: Sophie, a poor school-leaver bound for the biscuit factory, dreams of a boutique and fame, invents a meeting and a date with the Irish football star Danny Casey, and waits alone by the canal for a man who never comes.

Theme (NCERT): adolescent hero-worship and fantasising. Sub-theme: family and friends.

The story in seven stages

1. **Walking home.** Sophie: boutique, manager, actress, designer. Jansie: that takes money; both are "earmarked for the biscuit factory".
2. **At home.** Father mocks her ("buy us a blessed decent house"); Derek teases; mother tired at the sink.
3. **Geoff.** Quiet elder brother, apprentice mechanic, her hero. She says she met Casey in the arcade by Royce's. He does not believe her.
4. **The father.** Disdain; talks of Casey's talent and Tom Finney; warns she will talk herself into trouble.
5. **The date.** Casey asked to meet her next week. Saturday: United win 2-0; Casey scores the second goal.
6. **Jansie.** Geoff told Frank about the meeting but not the date. Sophie is relieved.
7. **The canal.** She waits under a solitary elm; doubt, then sadness. Casey never comes. She walks home replaying the imagined meeting and the goal.

Characters

Character	Key traits
Sophie	Dreamer; imaginative, restless; cannot separate fantasy and reality
Jansie	Practical, realistic, a little nosey
Geoff	Quiet, private; Sophie's link to the wider world
Father	Rough, dismissive; worships football
Danny Casey	Young Irish star of United; seen by Sophie only on the pitch

Themes

- **Fantasy against reality:** boutique and fame against the factory and a poor home.
- **Hero worship:** Casey's photos on Geoff's wall; the "weekly pilgrimage" to United.
- **Family:** dismissive father, silent mother, loved brother.
- **Title irony:** "going places" means heading for success; Sophie goes nowhere.

Word meanings

Word	Meaning	Word	Meaning
earmarked	set aside for	prodigy	young genius
melancholy	sad	chuffed	very pleased
incongruity	something out of place	wharf	landing place for boats
arcade	covered passage with shops	pangs of doubt	sharp feelings of doubt
disdain	looking down on someone	despondent	without hope

Common mistakes

- Sophie never meets Casey: write "the meeting she imagined".
- Casey is Irish and plays for United. Tom Finney is the father's old hero.
- Geoff is her elder brother, an apprentice mechanic. Frank is Jansie's brother.
- She waits on a bench by the canal under a solitary elm, not in a park.
- The last scene shifts to the present tense and "you": it is imagined.

Memory trick, "B-A-D Dreams": Boutique, Actress, Designer, then Danny.

Practice answers

1. **Where would the girls work after school?** The biscuit factory.
2. **Did Sophie really meet Casey?** No; she saw him only at the match, from the crowd.
3. **Why did she like Geoff most?** His silence and travel stood for the wider world she longed to enter.
4. **Why didn't she want Jansie to know?** Jansie would spread it, her father would hear, and there would be a row.
5. **Sophie's background?** Poor working class: manual-worker father, cramped steamy home, factory future.