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Going Places Introduction

Going Places is a short story by A. R. Barton that explores the perceptions, dreams, and desires of an adolescent girl named Sophie. The story provides insight into Sophie's life, her relationships with friends and family, her socio-economic background, and her vivid dreams and fantasies.

The phrase "Going Places" is an idiomatic expression referring to a young person's potential to become successful and famous. In this context, it reflects Sophie's aspirations and hopes for a better future.

Theme

The story deals with themes of adolescence, escapism, hero worship, and fantasizing. It beautifully portrays the complex emotions experienced during the teenage years, highlighting the blend of hope, dreams, and reality.

Message

The lesson conveys that dreaming is important, but dreams must be realistic. Mere fantasizing without hard work and perseverance can lead to disappointment and disillusionment.

Title Significance

The title "Going Places" captures the essence of the story. Sophie constantly imagines herself becoming rich and famous, which explains her behavior and outlook on life.

Key Terms

- **Adolescent:** A young person developing from a child into an adult.
- **Going places:** Being successful or promising a bright future.
- **Fascinating world:** A world that is very interesting, attractive, or enchanting.
- **Arcade:** A covered passageway with arches, often housing shops or amusements.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- What does the phrase "going places" mean in the story?
- Who is the protagonist of the story?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain the main theme of "Going Places."
- Why is the title significant to the story?

Level 3 – Challenging

- Discuss how the story portrays the emotions of adolescence through Sophie's character.
- Analyze the message the author conveys about dreams and reality.

Answer Key

- **Meaning of "going places":** It means being successful or having a promising future.
- **Protagonist:** Sophie, an adolescent girl with dreams of success.
- **Main theme:** The story explores adolescence, escapism, hero worship, and the contrast between dreams and reality.
- **Title significance:** It reflects Sophie's aspirations to become successful and famous.
- **Portrayal of adolescence:** Through Sophie's fantasies and interactions, the story shows the hopes, desires, and challenges faced by teenagers.
- **Message about dreams:** While dreaming is important, it must be accompanied by realistic efforts to avoid disillusionment.

Quick Reference

- **Going Places:** Idiomatic phrase meaning promising success.
- **Sophie:** Protagonist, a dreamer and adolescent girl.
- **Themes:** Adolescence, escapism, hero worship, fantasies.
- **Message:** Dream realistically and work hard.

Glossary

- **Adolescent:** A young person transitioning from childhood to adulthood.
- **Escapism:** The tendency to seek distraction from reality through imagination.
- **Hero worship:** Admiring someone greatly, often idealizing them.
- **Fantasizing:** Imagining things that are unlikely or impossible.

Going Places Summary

The story revolves around Sophie and her friend Jansie, classmates who are soon to leave school. Sophie is a dreamer who imagines owning a boutique and becoming a fashion designer or actress. Jansie, more realistic, knows they will likely have to work in a biscuit factory.

At home, Sophie's family is skeptical of her dreams. Her father sarcastically wishes she could buy a decent house, and her younger brother Derek mocks her ideas. Only her elder brother Geoff listens to her dreams with some sympathy.

Sophie idolizes Danny Casey, a young Irish football player for the United team. She claims to have met him in an arcade and asked for his autograph, but neither had pen or paper. Geoff doubts her story and warns their father, who dismisses it as a wild tale but cautions Sophie to be careful.

Sophie imagines the exciting world her brother Geoff visits as an apprentice mechanic and dreams of joining it. She tells Geoff about a planned meeting with Danny Casey, asking him to keep it secret. However, rumors spread, and Sophie becomes anxious about her secret being revealed.

One day, Sophie, her family, and friends watch a football match where Danny Casey scores a goal. Sophie feels proud of her hero, and her father celebrates at the pub.

Later, Sophie waits for Danny at a quiet spot by the canal, but he does not appear. Disappointed, she returns to the arcade, imagines meeting him again, and asks for an autograph once more. Danny disappears, leaving Sophie enchanted by the experience and her dreams intact.

Key Elements

Characters

- **Sophie:** The protagonist, an imaginative adolescent girl with big dreams.
- **Jansie:** Sophie's realistic friend and classmate.
- **Geoff:** Sophie's elder brother, an apprentice mechanic.
- **Derek:** Sophie's younger brother, skeptical of her dreams.
- **Father and Mother:** Represent the practical and sometimes harsh reality of Sophie's family life.
- **Danny Casey:** Sophie's football hero, a young promising player.

Themes

- Adolescence and dreams
- Reality versus fantasy
- Hero worship and admiration
- Family dynamics and socio-economic challenges

Literary Devices

- **Imagery:** Descriptions of the football match and the canal create vivid pictures.
- **Symbolism:** Danny Casey symbolizes hope and aspiration.
- **Irony:** Sophie's dreams contrast with her family's practical concerns.

Important Quotes

- "Going places" – reflects Sophie's aspirations.
- "Money doesn't grow on trees" – Derek's realistic remark.
- "Danny Casey scores the second goal" – a moment of pride for Sophie.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is Sophie's hero in the story?
- What does Sophie want to own after school?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Describe Sophie's relationship with her family.
- Why does Sophie feel uncomfortable at home?

Level 3 – Challenging

- Analyze the significance of the meeting place by the canal in the story.
- Discuss how Sophie's fantasies affect her perception of reality.

Answer Key

- **Sophie's hero:** Danny Casey, the young football player.
- **Sophie's dream:** To own a boutique and become a fashion designer or actress.
- **Relationship with family:** Mixed; supportive brother Geoff, skeptical father and siblings.
- **Uncomfortable at home:** Family mocks her dreams and focuses on practical struggles.
- **Meeting place significance:** The canal represents a secluded, ideal spot for dreams and secret meetings, symbolizing Sophie's escapism.
- **Effect of fantasies:** They provide hope but also cause disappointment when reality does not meet expectations.

Quick Reference

- **Sophie:** Dreamer and protagonist.
- **Jansie:** Realistic friend.
- **Family:** Represents reality and skepticism.
- **Danny Casey:** Symbol of hope and hero worship.

Glossary

- **Apprentice mechanic:** A person learning a trade in mechanics.
- **Secluded:** Quiet and private, away from others.
- **Disillusionment:** Feeling of disappointment when reality does not meet expectations.