

THE GOSSIPS

- GOSSIP 1 - The Miss Dashwoods are highly thought of throughout all the county, I think. Elinor Dashwood is said to possess a strength of understanding and coolness of judgement, and yet an affectionate disposition.
- GOSSIP 2 - Mariann Dashwood is a lively enough girl, eager in all she does. I should think any young man who made a connection with the Miss Dashwoods should have little reason to regret it.
- GOSSIP 1 - Well, we shall see. Poor Mr. Dashwood -- carried away so suddenly! Woke one morning with a fever and drew his last gasp within the week!
- GOSSIP 2 - Poor Mr. Dashwood! But a very handsome funeral. The serenity of the corpse was most delightful.
- GOSSIP 1 - Poor Mr. Dashwood! And poor Mrs. Dashwood, in every sense of the word. You know that his widow and daughters are left with almost nothing!
- GOSSIP 2 - But Norland Park is such a large estate! Where there many debts?
- GOSSIP 1 - No, nothing like that. It was a question of the law.
- GOSSIP 2 - Did somebody break the law?
- GOSSIP 1 - No, no. Mr. Dashwood could not legally bequeath it to the ladies. It all went to his son from the previous marriage, Mr. John Dashwood.
- GOSSIP 2 - But wasn't he a rich man already?
- GOSSIP 1 - Oh yes, he married into money. But his rich wife - not a sympathetic creature - moved into Norland Park the day after the funeral, without a word of notice to the new widow. And so, the young ladies and their mother are left in such reduced circumstances! How shall the girls ever catch a man?
- GOSSIP 2 - As to that, I understand Mrs. John Dashwood's brother, Mr. Edward Ferrars, is to stay with his sister at Norland for a time. And he is a bachelor...
- GOSSIP 1 - ... and stands to inherit a large fortune from his mother!
- GOSSIP 2 - If one of the Dashwoods could make a catch of him...