Book Club Questions For The Flight of Gemma Hardy.

These questions reflect discussions I've had with early readers of The Flight of Gemma Hardy. I've tried to frame them without giving away too much of the plot. I do hope that they will provide food for lively discussion. Any suggestions for additional questions would be most welcome.

1. Did Gemma's name take on new meanings for you in the course of the novel? What about the other names she uses at various points?

2. In the opening chapters, Gemma's aunt is quite hardhearted, even cruel. Did your opinion of her change by the time you finished the novel?

3. How do you think the various landscapes that Gemma passes through help to change, or inform, her journey?

4. Gemma's uncle is a devout Christian. Do you think Gemma minds losing her faith? Do her childhood values still govern her actions?

5. Throughout the novel there are various supernatural occurrences. How do you understand these?

6. How do Gemma's relations with the various orphans she takes care of deepen your sense of her?

7. Gemma is at the mercy of chance but she also takes charge of her life and makes certain crucial decisions. How do you feel about those decisions?

8. What about the role of animals and birds in Gemma's life?

9. If you've read Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, are there places in The Flight of Gemma Hardy where you find yourself remembering Jane particularly vividly? Do those memories change, or deepen, your reading?

10. Did The Flight of Gemma Hardy make you think of other orphan stories beyond Jane Eyre? Why are orphan stories so endlessly appealing?