**The Doom of the Griffiths**

1. 1 A curse is supernatural/pagan, so as a Unitarian minister’s wife, how does ECG deal with the idea of a supernatural curse in this story? Do you feel this ‘Doom’ could have been avoided?
2. How does Gaskell make this feel like a ‘Welsh’ story?
3. In this story, as in ‘The Old Nurse’s Tale’, Gaskell presents the landowning aristocracy/squirearchy as being violent in their protection of hereditary rights. Owen throws his baby grandson at its mother while Lord Furnivall beats his granddaughter with a stick before condemning it to death in the snow. What is Gaskell’s purpose in creating such violence against innocence? Particularly as according to John Chapple, this story was started just after Marianne’s birth and therefore after the death of her first child, it was revised in 1857.
4. ‘As the heir, there was no worldly necessity for exertion: his father was too much of a Welsh squire to dream of the moral necessity, and he himself had not sufficient strength of mind to decide at once upon abandoning a place and mode of life which abounded in daily mortifications; yet to this course his judgment was slowly tending, when some circumstances occurred to detain him at Bodowen’.
5. This is an interesting comment by Gaskell. What does she mean by ‘the moral necessity’ and what do you feel is the authors judgement on the landed gentry?
6. In Further Letters, Alan Shelston writes that Anne Holland and ECG ‘once had an idea of writing a ‘history of *crimes* of *innocent* people’. How far are the people in this story innocent?
7. The female protagonist is called Nest, a name Gaskell had previously used in another ‘Welsh’ story, ‘The Well of Pen Morfa’ , both women are presented as being flirtatious and both suffer much unhappiness. Yet Gaskell’s presentation of Nest is complex and ambivalent, leaving us questioning our early opinions of the woman. Why do you think Gaskell presents Nest in this way?
8. What is the roll of Ellis Pritchard, Nest’s father in this story? Does Gaskell portray him in a consistent manner?
9. But now it appeared to him as if there was to be no forgiveness; as if his father revolted even in death against any such peaceful union. Is there any forgiveness in this story? Why does ECG end this story as she does?