

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCORE/GRADE:**

**PLOT: *The Bronze Bow***

In a single paragraph, evaluate the thematic significance of this story's DENOUEMENT – that is, explain how the author uses this structural element to emphasize the story's main themes. As always, refer to the events of the story in your answer. For page-length answers, attach a separate sheet if necessary.

The denouement of this story is relatively swift. Realizing in the midst of Jesus' visit that the freedom he craves comes through forgiveness alone, Daniel finds peace. This deliverance is evident not only in intangible and inexpressible feelings, but in his immediate actions towards the Roman centurion he had vowed to hate. Daniel invites him into his home to see Leah in her regained consciousness. His relationship with Malthace, too, is repaired, in both her presence with Jesus at the healing, and her loving concern for him. "He heard Thacia catch her breath, and turned and looked into her eyes. He knew he was not worthy of the gift he saw there, but he knew that at last he was free to offer her all that he had in return. In that one brief look they made a new vow together" (p. 253-254). In a moment, Daniel's hatred has been exchanged for love, his despair for hope, and his torment for life.

In this denouement, Daniel finally experiences the truth of his conjecture, "Was it possible that only love could bend the bow of bronze?" (p. 252). Speare communicates her overriding theme that love is indeed stronger than hatred. This universal truth is expressed by the Apostle John in the Scriptures. "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). By extension and comparison, Daniel also learns that bitterness breeds only death. This truth, too, is expressed in the Bible in the book of Hebrews. "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled..." (Hebrews 12:14-15). The strength of Speare's novel is in its appeal to such universal themes. Her exploration of the nature and strength of bitterness and love result in a resounding and victorious affirmation of the Truth.