

# The relationship between maria thins and griet essay



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In the novel, "Girl With a Pearl Earring," by Tracy Chevalier, Maria Thins and Griet have an interesting sort of relationship. At first, Maria Thins' view of Griet is on the verge of cruel and very criticizing. But that opinion that she has of Griet changes for the positive. Griet, on the other hand, fears and looks up to Maria. She feels that Maria has some qualities of a role model. But she also knows that she does not want to be exactly like her. These qualities are what make their relationship extremely complex.

Maria's thoughts of Griet at the start of the book were very harsh. She felt that Griet was just another insignificant maid that she and her family could push and order around. Maria Thins degraded her once when she was showing her thoughts too openly. She said, "That's right, girl. Keep your thoughts to yourself here." (page 18) But Maria Thins does soften up after a while and it seems that she is growing fond of Griet. Perhaps she sees Griet's relationship with Johannes Vermeer and how she might be helping him to paint faster. She also sees how clever Griet is. Maria expresses her newfound admiration by saying to Griet, "Ah, you're a cunning one, girl. You know whose pot to spoon from. Never mind, we can do with a bit of cleverness around here." (page 45)

Griet, to an extent, likes Maria thins. But she often is confused about how she truly feels about her. Sometimes Maria would make her feel ashamed about a decision she made once she found out about it. But she was also kind to Griet. For example, she kept one of Griet's biggest secrets, assisting Vermeer with his paintings by grinding the paint. She also knows that Griet is posing for one of those paintings, something that Catharina, Vermeer's wife, could never know about. "You help him to paint faster, girl," she (Maria

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Thins) said in a low voice, “ and you’ll keep your place here. Not a word to my daughter or Tanneke, now.” (page 110) Griet learns that for the most part, Maria Thins is a trustworthy person that can keep a secret if it is for the greater good.

In the beginning, Maria Thins is suspicious of Griet. Griet, on the other hand, is wary of Maria. They are both very aware of one another and both seem to have trust issues. Maria is always keeping a sharp eye out for trouble. Griet is quite intent on not making a mistake, especially in front of Maria; she is unsure of the consequences that may end up resulting from her actions. But they both learn to trust one another after getting to know the other’s ways. Griet trusts that Maria will not give away her secrets. Maria knows that she can trust Griet to do her job and that she will do it properly as well.

The relationship of Maria Thins and Griet is like a see-saw. They both experience their highs and lows with one another. Maria begins with having a low tolerance of Griet and therefore feels that she is untrustworthy and needs to be watched over. But she learns to trust Griet. She even helps her out of a few sticky situations. When Griet first meets Maria, she knows that she is to be feared and soon learns to be cautious around Maria. Although, she does earn respect from Maria and her trust, a rare thing. She learns to stay on her good side by learning from previous mistakes. But those are what keep her inward fear of Maria alive. All of these things make for a very difficult, yet somewhat simple to understand relationship.