

## AND WHY NOT?

That question often occurred to her, but only momentarily in the darkest recesses of what she liked to think of as her heart. What was it that she plotted so secretly alone in the night? It was not so much a plot as a continual movement of her thinking. It does not even matter so much what it was, but only that she endlessly reverted to that thought, that it came naturally to her, that everything she saw or read or listened to, refuelled this one inner reflection. In that, one might call it her religion because it absorbed her, body, mind and soul.

Alex, her eldest son, who would come visiting sometimes with his wife, never knew about these inward movements of his mother's consciousness. How could he when she was his mother? He had not yet learnt to see her as independent from him, a being, with her own destiny. She was still his mother, and in that Elizabeth acquiesced, if somewhat reluctantly. But to the extent that Alex lived so far away and came to visit less frequently over the years, Elizabeth came more and more to be herself and less and less his mother. Alex never knew this, selfish young man that he was, because he never experienced her in any other way than as 'mum'.

And Rosemary had always been a difficult child, jealous