So the question of how this all filters through into the life that you then eventually have, well, it's a perennial subject. It never goes away, does it?'

Left: Rose Below: the

Tremain.

ndling

ospital

I am lucky enough to have been a student of Tremain's at the University of East Anglia, where she taught on the master's in creative writing; she

> was later UEA's first female Chancellor. She says: 'I saw Lily as a small but intensely courageous person - who might be beaten by the circumstances in which she is forced to live. But I thought: the worse things get for her, the more she fights, and I suppose stoicism is something which I fantastically admire in everybody.'

Lily has only one name in its acknowledgements, that of the surgeon who saved Tremain's life in 2019 when she was suffering from bile duct cancer. As she was travelling to the hospital for what she calls her 'fearsome oper-

ation', she got a call telling her she was

being offered a damehood. 'So, I thought, "This is one other thing to try and survive this experience for". It came out of the blue - one little additional hook for the future to get me through bad times.'

Tremain's gift is to create characters whose experiences span every walk of life, but who are grounded in their author's understanding of the world. Lily - the character, the novel itself - is no exception. 'Lily' by Rose Tremain (£18.99, Chatto & Windus) is published on 11 November.

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WILD Mo The atmospheric beauty of Scotland,

captured on paper

Following on from her memoir about moving from London to a Hebridean island, Tamsin Calidas has spent the past four years capturing the landscapes that surround her on camera, which the artist book-binder Kate Rochester has now hand-bound into a beautiful limited-edition book. CB 'A Wilder Voice' by Tamsin Calidas (£35, Hanbury Press) is published on 1 December.

