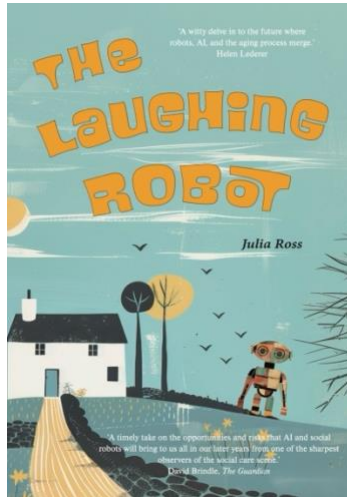


BOOK FACT SHEET

THE LAUGHING ROBOT

A novel by Julia Ross



Title: Arena Books
Author: Jessica Holmes
Publisher: Arena Books
Format: Paperback & Ebook
Paperback ISBN: 9781914390333
Ebook ISBN: 9781914390340
Price: £14.99
Pages 300 pages
Size: 229mm x 152mm (6" x 9")

THE STORY

Anna, a disillusioned social worker, escapes to the Isle of Wight seeking peace—only to find herself caught up in a controversial government experiment using AI robots to care for the elderly. When the island is transformed into "Home Farm," a care facility run entirely by robots, Anna must navigate a world where the boundaries between human and machine blur dangerously.

With her robot companion Henry2 by her side, Anna uncovers a sinister end-of-life pathway called the "Right Way" and finds herself fighting for survival. In a dramatic escape that will keep readers gripped until the final page, Anna and Henry2 must outwit those who would decide when her life should end.

The Laughing Robot is a page-turning thriller that asks urgent questions: Can robots truly care? What does autonomy mean in old age? And who decides when our lives have value?

WHY THIS BOOK MATTERS NOW

With care worker shortages reaching crisis levels, aging populations exploding, and AI technology advancing rapidly, *The Laughing Robot* isn't science fiction—it's a preview of decisions society must make today.

Real-world parallels:

- MIT just unveiled a robot to catch elderly people when they fall
- South Korea has distributed 12,000+ AI companions to isolated seniors
- China's elderly-care robot market exceeded \$4 billion in 2024

- Teenagers are turning to AI chatbots for therapy
- The Louise Casey Review of Social Care is imminent

KEY THEMES

- Autonomy and dignity in aging
- The ethics of AI in caregiving
- Ageism and societal attitudes toward the elderly
- End-of-life care and the right to choose
- Technology versus human connection
- The social care crisis
- What it means to be human

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

"A gripping exploration of what our future might hold—uncomfortable, urgent, and impossible to put down."

"Julia Ross brings insider knowledge to a story that feels less like fiction and more like prophecy."

"Dark humour mixed with serious questions about care, dignity, and who gets to decide our fate."

PERFECT FOR READERS WHO LOVED

- Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me*
- Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*
- *The Children Act* by Ian McEwan
- Fay Weldon's social commentary novels
- Anyone interested in AI ethics, healthcare policy, or thought-provoking literary fiction

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Adults 40+ who enjoy contemporary fiction
- Healthcare and social care professionals
- Technology ethicists and AI enthusiasts
- Book clubs seeking discussion-worthy reads
- Policy makers and care sector leaders
- Literary fiction readers who enjoy social commentary
- Isle of Wight residents and visitors

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julia Ross is Chair of the British Association of Social Workers UK and former Director of Social Services. Her career spans nursing, social work, and AI/predictive analytics—making her uniquely positioned to write about the collision of care and technology. She lives on the Isle of Wight, where the novel is set.

Previous books: *Call the Social* (2022), *When People Die* (book for children)

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

Julia Ross is available for:

- Print, broadcast, and podcast interviews
- Book club discussions (virtual or in-person)
- Panel discussions on AI, aging, and social care
- Literary festival appearances
- Expert commentary on care sector issues

UPCOMING APPEARANCE

Isle of Wight Literary Festival 2025

Julia will discuss the novel and its relevance to today's social care crisis.

MEDIA ASSETS AVAILABLE

- High-resolution book cover (multiple formats)
- Author photographs
- Sample chapters
- Pre-prepared Q&A
- Pull quotes from the novel
- Infographics on robots in elderly care

CONTACT

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SOCIAL MEDIA

#TheLaughingRobot #JuliaRoss #Alcare #ElderCare #LiteraryFiction #IsleOfWight