



The Architects of Control: A Political Thriller

Harold Greene

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Federal intrusions reach a boiling point in the engrossing political thriller The Architects of Control, in which challenges to people's liberty are sometimes fatal.

Unlikely allies stand in the way of an AI-assisted takeover of democracy in Harold Greene's frightening political thriller *The Architects of Control*.

In New Denmark, Maine, with the presidential election only six weeks away, Robert, a town deputy, arrives at the scene of a hit-and-run in the forest. In the process, he stumbles upon an isolated fishing hut with five migrants inside. The next day, his partner is fatally shot in the same area.

Meanwhile, Robert's daughter, Lucy, the town manager, persuades the residents to host a new solar company project with the promise of jobs and clean energy. Robert ends up questioning the solar company's executives about his partner's shooting, though, after which a damaging fake AI video of him hits the internet. Around the same time, a Norwegian election observer, Tormund, and his former intelligence analyst friend, Willa, find discrepancies in the town's midterm elections suggesting massive voter swings. They contact Lucy to share their findings, revealing sinister goings-on in the town.

Backgrounded by a far-reaching plan to control elections and voters themselves, this is a nonstop, hair-raising adventure. Those cast members who are on a mission to save democracy prove to be the most compelling. Robert's loneliness as a widower and Lucy's quiet struggle with her sexual orientation are perfect counterpoints to twentysomething Tormund's longing to make a difference and Willa's gruff exterior that conceals her painful past. Together, they are a powerful quartet, aided by a few other intriguing characters, including Theo, a reclusive radio personality with a grudge.

The villains of the book exist more in the shadows, controlling networks that are hidden behind shell companies. Artificial intelligence and social media saturation are among their most powerful weapons, as disinformation campaigns prove corrosive to people's abilities to discern the truth for themselves. The book's "current administration" is unnamed but evocative. Meanwhile, the mystery of the migrants in the fishing hut is answered by a secret that Robert's wife kept from him, but not from Lucy: her work running an underground escape route for pregnant women fleeing a draconian federal abortion ban, hoping to cross from Maine into Canada.

Moving between taut action sequences and moments of quiet emotional impact, the book follows along as its central four learn to lean on and trust one another. In the case of Lucy and Willa, love even blooms. The book moves toward an explosive climax that hints at a continuation of its story.

Extrapolating from contemporary news, trends, and technological developments, *The Architects of Control* is an excellent thriller in which a coalition of democracy defenders fights against those who compromise free and fair elections.

PEGGY KURKOWSKI (April 27, 2026)

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