

# RAZOR'S EDGE

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An VERTICON Story

## RAZOR'S EDGE

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PHOTON BOOKS

# RAZOR'S EDGE

The southwestern wind howled through the jagged mouth of the abandoned missile silo, carrying with it the tang of rust and something far older. Suspended by tactical ropes, the man and woman in full masks and protective gear descended hundreds of feet into the darkness, their headlamps slicing through layers of dust and shadow.

The circular wall seemed to close in as the echo of their boots on steel rungs faded into a silence so deep it felt alive. Somewhere below, a faint, rhythmic clanging rose up—too deliberate to be the wind, too steady to be chance.

The man - Dominic - glanced over at his counterpart - Avery - feeling as if he were being swallowed up by some gigantic beast rising up from within the earth.

The couple rappelled further, bypassing air intake and exhaust shafts. Rough pieces of metal hung along the silo wall. A rusted ladder

could be seen before they reached the bottom of the vertical, cylindrical structure.

Their boots came to rest on a concrete floor covered by sand and dirt. Dominic and Avery unhooked the ropes attached to their belts and glanced up at the circle of blue sky.

“It would've been easier if the entrance portal wasn't blocked,” Dominic said, his voice echoing.

“Then we would've missed out on the fun,” Avery affirmed.

“Everything about this place is dangerous.”

“Illegal, too. But that's never stopped us before.”

“That's true.” Dominic activated the communication relay inside his full face respirator gas mask to their comrades Stryker and Plexy above. “We made it to the bottom.”

“Copy that, Dominic,” Stryker replied.

“There's nothing here,” Avery added, scanning the bottom of the shaft. “It's empty.”

“There could be a hidden silo or another compartment,” Dominic suggested.

The couple walked several feet in opposite directions before the airborne intercept sensors attached to their upper arms beeped, the numbers confirming the presence of a toxic threat.

“It could be PCB's or asbestos,” Dominic

suggested.

They examined the silo wall all the way around, finding nothing but ventilation compartments. Dominic and Avery arrived at the bottom of the old, rusted ladder leading up to the main platform.

“Not exactly ideal,” Dominic commented.

“I’ll go first,” Avery said.

“If you insist,” Dominic replied, moving out of the way.

Avery placed her gloved hands on the railing and stepped up. Dominic watched her climb, making it to the platform over a hundred feet above.

Once Avery was off the ladder, he began to climb. Dominic’s body weight caused the rickety structure to shift. He paused momentarily before picking up his pace.

Dominic was most of the way up when one side of the ladder broke off. Left hanging loosely, he reached up to grab the step above when the other side broke.

Dominic’s heart nearly skipped a beat. He let go as he plummeted a dozen feet before the tactical rope attached to his belt caught him.

“Nic!” Avery called out from above.

“I’m alright,” Dominic replied, swinging loosely before his boots touched the silo wall. Utilizing the position, he climbed up one foot at

a time. Dominic ascended until reaching the platform, where Avery helped him onto the floor.

Once on steady ground, Dominic looked down into the dark silo shaft and back up to the top. He saw Stryker peering over the edge and gave him a thumbs up. Dominic got to his feet, detached the robe and secured the hook next to Avery's on a steel beam.

“Are you alright?” She asked.

“Never better,” Dominic answered, bending the truth a bit.

The couple pulled guns from their sides before Dominic took the lead once again.

He moved a short distance, to an access hatch leading into the rest of the site. Dominic turned the external handle. The steel hatch groaned as it swung open, exhaling a breath of stale, metallic air.

Avery's light beam cut through the darkness, revealing a warning sign and the shadowy recesses of a circular, tube-like, corridor.

Dominic ventured inside first, pointing his weapon in the direction of his light as he went. Avery did the same.

Their boots echoed against the grated floor. The readings on their electronic sensors strengthened, confirming a greater unseen danger than before.

“It's radiation,” Avery stated. “We need to move fast.”

Continuing on, they discovered an elevator shaft and stairwell.

“This is where we should've come in,” Dominic said. “If it weren't blocked.”

They pair returned to the corridor and advanced further. Somewhere in the silence of the facility, a faint metallic clang reverberated. Dominic and Avery glided through the passage without a sound, passing a series of blast doors and antenna pits, following the clanging noise towards its origin.

The pair arrived at the end of the corridor. Dominic motioned to Avery, who responded with a nod. Silently counting down from three, they burst into an empty control center with weapons ready to fire.

The lights from their headlamps revealed a pair of metallic fixtures hanging loosely from the ceiling, striking against one another.

Avery turned. Her light shifted, exposing a human form facing away from them, sitting in the darkness in front of a computer.

“Stand up slowly!” Dominic instructed. “Now!”

There was no motion or response.

The pair advanced forward, bypassing abandoned operating stations. They concentrated their weapons on the lone form,

approaching from behind.

Dominic and Avery circled around him on either side before seeing the mummified, uniformed remains of a man long dead.

The couple lowered their guns.

“What do you think happened to him?”

Avery asked.

Dominic shook his head, then inspected the skeleton. “No gunshot holes. If I had to guess, radiation.”

“Why would he have stayed here, knowing he would die?”

“Maybe he drew the short straw.”

“Dominic,” Avery called out, nodding to something on the wall.

Dominic looked over to see a Geiger counter. He walked over and studied it. “It's as dead as he is.”

“Figures.”

“All this tells a story, and not one that's particularly heartwarming.”

“It's probably best we don't know what it is,” Avery added, studying computer hardware that looked to be at least two decades old.

She ran one hand across an old keyboard, brushing off a thick layer of dust. The computer screen came to life, accompanied by a collection of electronic sounds.

“There's still power,” Avery said.

“It's auxiliary,” Dominic added.

“Probably only a small amount remaining.”

Avery took a seat and typed onto the keyboard.

A muffled electronic voice emitted through an old speaker next to the computer.

“What's it saying?” Dominic asked.

“The weather forecast, I think,” Avery answered, studying the screen. “From March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1996.”

“Not exactly helpful.”

Avery attempted to access additional information from the computer.

“Anything?” Dominic asked.

“No. The hard drive's corrupted.”

Dominic leaned over her shoulder and studied a collection of fragmented numbers and letters. “I doubt they would've left anything on the computers of any value. Especially sensitive files on something like the pulsar.”

“There has to be a reason the intel led us here,” Avery argued.

“We misinterpreted the data,” Dominic said as a drop of sweat rolled down the side of his face beneath the mask. “It's a simply as that. It's not the first time and won't be the last.”

“We should check the others. Just in case,” Avery suggested before awakening another computer to find it nonfunctional.

Dominic sat down at a control panel and pressed several buttons. A large, transparent

partition hung from the ceiling lit up, revealing a schematic of the United States. Dozens of red lights blinked in various places.

“What is that?” Avery asked.

“I think it's the location of other silo's or nuclear weapons,” Dominic answered.

Before he could study the schematic in greater detail, the lights faded. Dominic turned to see the computers had also ceased working.

“That's the last of the power,” Avery said. “You were right.”

The couple exited the control center. They descended to the bottom level, housing the dead power supply and life support system. The top level contained bunk beds.

Dominic checked an empty closet before spotting dark markings on the floor. He knelt down and took a closer look, realizing they were dried drops of blood.

“Whatever occurred here happened a long time ago,” Avery said before the intercept sensors beeped.

Dominic checked the screen on his device. “The readings are stronger. We need to go.”

The couple exited the room.

“We're headed back to the silo,” Avery announced through her comm.

“Copy that,” Stryker replied.

Dominic and Avery returned to the

vertical chamber. They reattached the ropes to their belts and ascended back to the surface. The sun had begun to set over the Arizona desert as they emerged. Stryker helped them up with a solid grip from his muscular arms.

On solid ground, Avery removed her mask and took a deep breath of fresh air, letting her long dark hair cascade beyond her shoulders.

Dominic also removed his mask and wiped sweat from his bearded face.

“What all did you see down there?” Plexy asked, rejoining the group from a short distance away.

“Nothing good,” Dominic replied, detaching the ropes from his belt.

“Or helpful,” Avery added. “We’ll report to Vanguard as soon as we’re back in transmission range.”

“Right,” Styker affirmed. “If we’re done here, Plexy and I are returning to Outpost 65.”

“Of course.”

“But once you find the pulsar, we want to help take it out.”

“You got it,” Dominic replied.

“Let us know if you need any more assistance,” Stryker added.

“We will. Be safe out there.”

Stryker and Plexy got into their vehicle and drove off. Meanwhile, Dominic and Avery

carried the rappelling gear to their SUV and placed it into the back. They shed their thick, protective uniforms before departing the site.

Dominic returned to a lonely, isolated two-laned highway cutting through the desert. Some time passed before they were out of the dead zone and Avery was able to make a call on her wireless devices.

“The intel was wrong. We've come up empty again,” Avery announced to the leader of their group. “Returning to base now.”

Following the brief communication, Avery rested her device on the middle console as they continued on to their next destination.

Some weeks later, the couple listened to a fringe podcast as they traveled across the country once again.

“Whether you're in the heartland, the Midwest, the deep south, the southwest, the Pacific northwest or someplace in between, this is the Nighthawk, transmitting from an undisclosed location east of the Rockies,” a man introduced with a gravelly voice. “You're listening to Outbound Radio, a broadcast consisting of truth bombs for the sole purpose of awakening as many as possible from the collective hive mind of humanity. If you're awake, then I congratulate you, because you understand what true freedom is. Freedom from enslavement to the matrix and imprisonment to

the Controllers...”

“You know who this guy is?” Avery asked as the podcast continued.

“Yeah. His name's Kohler. Ron Kohler. He's in his fifties, ex-military, disenfranchised with the government,” Dominic replied.

“I know the type.”

“The first Dominic either knew him or knew of him. I'm not sure which. I've reached out to him multiple times, but he never responds.”

“At his very moment, the Controllers are planning the ultimate subjugation of the human race,” the Nighthawk continued. “They're hard at work making certain that you and your children will either die or surrender to their master plan called the New World Order, which will be thrust upon us all very soon. In fact, they would have us believe that we're the result of mere evolution and happenstance, and that our lives are meaningless. That the true living God doesn't exist. That's right, they don't want you or I to realize that we're made in His image. Instead, they're usurping our God-given rights for their own nefarious reasons...”

“He's good,” Avery said. “I wonder how big his listening audience is.”

The podcast continued. “While we're on the subject, I feel compelled to say that if you believe that Earth is a planet, then you're

deceived. The Earth is, in fact, a vast plain at the center of creation, directly under heaven itself. Just as a literal hell is beneath us, heaven is above us. As opposed to the false teaching of endless space with billions of stars, planets and alien life. Above the blue sky is a firmament dome. That's right, a molten glass covering. Some of you might label me a lunatic or a conspiracy theorist for believing this. In fact, many of you listening right now will label anything lunacy that doesn't align with your humanistic, heliocentric view of the universe. The cosmology that secular education has indoctrinated you in..."

"I'm impressed," Avery commented, raising her eyebrows.

"But the Elites are so obsessed with controlling the world and deceiving humanity that they've been working hard for many decades to destroy the firmament, if that were possible," the Nighthawk explained. "You heard me right. They've created a weapon that shoots high energy beams at the dome in an attempt to crack it."

Dominic and Avery's eyes met, confirming the same thoughts between them.

"This weapon is very real and is hidden in a remote location. The Elites believe that if they can break through the firmament, they can escape this current reality and break through to

the one created by the true god, which of course they believe to be Lucifer...”

“He knows a lot,” Dominic said.

“Unless he's controlled opposition,”

Avery countered.

“Doubtful. If he were, what would the Elite's gain by drawing attention to it?”

“I don't know, but I think it's time we paid a personal visit to this guy,” Avery suggested.

“I agree,” Dominic affirmed before retrieving the Verticon flash drive and handing it to Avery.

She connected the part glass, part metal device into the USB port of a laptop computer. A blue light flashed within the glass and Avery accessed the contents.

“Got it,” Avery confirmed, staring at the screen. “He lives in eastern Colorado. This location shouldn't be too hard to find.”

“I doubt he wants to be found,” Dominic said.

In the days that followed, Dominic made one final attempt to contact Kohler but received no response. Traveling across the country once again, the couple made a trip to the location recorded on the drive.

Dominic pulled off the main road in eastern Colorado and onto dirt road. He drove a short distance until arriving at a chained gate

with a sign attached.

PRIVATE PROPERTY  
NO TRESSPASSING

“This is it,” Avery said. “It has to be.”  
Dominic shut the engine off.

The couple stepped out of the vehicle. They gathered several instruments from the back, locked the doors and proceeded past the gate. They detoured off the road, through a wooded area, spotting a row a colossal electrical towers a short distance away.

Through the trees, Dominic and Avery observed a trailer surrounded by a chain-link fence with barbed wire at the top. An old truck sat parked in front of the gate. A BEWARE OF DOG sign hung on the fence.

A top the trailer sat a pair of transmission antennas, a satellite dish and several solar panels.

“This is about what I expected,” Avery commented.

“Me, too,” Dominic affirmed.

Avery utilized binoculars and studied the trailer in greater detail.

“Anything?” Dominic asked.

“No. I can't see inside. The windows are blocked.”

The couple surveyed the site for several

minutes.

“I'm going in,” Avery announced, sticking to the plan.

“Be careful,” Dominic replied.

Avery removed her instruments. She backtracked to the dirt road and followed it towards the fence. Before she could reach it, a deafening alarm began to blare.

Avery moved forward and attempted to open the gate, but found it locked.

“Hello?” She called out, her voice drowned out by the loud noise.

The alarm eventually cut off.

“Hello!!” Avery repeated, remaining in front of the gate.

“YOU'RE TRESPASSING!” A grizzled voice boomed through a set of hidden speakers. “THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY.”

“I know. My name's Avery. I'm looking for Ron Kohler.”

“LEAVE NOW OR I'LL CALL THE POLICE! THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY.”

“Please. I need to talk to you. It's about your broadcasts.”

“WHO'S THE MAN HIDING IN THE TREES?”

“That's Dominic,” Avery responded. “We've been listening to your podcast. It's very important that we talk to you.”

“HOW DID YOU FIND THIS

PLACE?”

“We're with a group, a network opposed to the Elites,” Avery added. “We're trying to stop them before it's too late.”

Silence.

Dominic slowly emerged from the trees without his instruments. He raised both hands above his waist before joining Avery.

“We've been fighting the Globalists for years,” Avery explained.

More silence.

“We were a part of the Archangel mission,” Dominic added. “I believe you're familiar with it.”

Several moments of silence passed.

“Hello?” Dominic asked.

“HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE  
TELLING THE TRUTH?”

“Because we have no reason to lie,” Avery replied. “You have my word.”

“YOUR WORD MEANS NOTHING  
TO ME. I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE.  
THERE COULD BE OTHERS WAITING  
TOAMBUSH ME?”

“It's just the two of us. We came alone.”

“IF YOU HAVE ANY WEAPONS,  
PLACE THEM ON THE GROUND.”

“We're unarmed,” Avery declared, raising both hands into the air and turning around in a circle.

Dominic did the same.

A buzz was heard and the gate unlocked. Dominic and Avery traded looks before venturing forward. They stepped up onto a small porch and approached the door of the trailer, which opened. The barrel of a rifle emerged from the dark interior.

The couple froze, raising their hands in a gesture of surrender.

“That's not necessary. We already proved that we came unarmed,” Avery explained.

“We're not a threat.”

“So you say,” the man responded. “There could be more of you.”

“There's not. We came alone, as I said.”

“You didn't answer my question before. How did you find this place?”

“It was on a device that I acquired from someone who was killed by the Elites,” Dominic explained.

Several moments passed before the barrel of the gun disappeared back into the trailer. The door opened fully.

“Come inside,” the man said.

Dominic and Avery cautiously entered the darkened trailer, taking in an overpowering aroma of cigarette smoke.

They were met by a casually-dressed, middle-aged man with long graying hair pulled back into a ponytail.

The man shut the door and locked it behind Dominic and Avery before studying them. "You're not Dominic. You're Rick Donovan. Journalist for the Washington Post."

"Not anymore," Dominic replied. "Not for a long time."

"Aren't you supposed to be dead?"

"Rick Donovan IS dead. I'm not."

"What happened to the first Dominic? Derek Bailey?" Ron asked. "He was my friend."

"An assassin killed him at his residence in Washington DC six years ago, shortly after I met him."

"I knew he'd been taken out when he went silent."

"He's the reason I'm here," Dominic explained, removing the part metal, part glass Verticon flash drive from one pocket and showing it to the man. "The reason I got involved in fighting the Controllers. I wish I could've thanked him, but he was gone by the time I realized everything he told me was true."

Ron teared up, studying the flash drive. He handed it back to Dominic and turned away.

"I was the one who emailed you," Dominic added. "Why didn't you answer?"

"I don't respond to anything from unfamiliar senders," Ron answered.

"You don't trust anyone, do you?"

"Nobody but God."

The couple followed Ron further inside the trailer. An elaborate network of interconnected computer monitors and other electronics occupied one end.

Printouts and photos of esoteric symbols, conspiracy data and news articles covered a board along one wall, accompanied by illustrations of the Global Elite.

“How long have you known the truth?” Avery asked.

“Long enough.” Ron sat down in a chair in front of a computer, lit up a cigarette and began to smoke. “911 was my wakeup call, shortly after I was discharged from the military.”

“And you've been living here ever since?” Dominic said.

“It was the best place to keep Uncle Sam off my back. This land's been in my family for generations.”

Ron exhaled cigarette smoke and looked at Avery. “Derek Bailey was my friend. He knew his days were numbered even before he moved to DC.”

“How did you meet?” Dominic asked.

“Through an online conspiracy forum about fifteen years ago.” Ron motioned to Avery. “What about you? What's your story?”

“My father was former CIA,” Avery answered. “When he realized who was really

running the show, he quit and become one of the leaders in our group. He was killed by the same man who killed Derek.”

“The reason we came here was to ask you about the weapon you talked about in the podcast,” Dominic explained. “The one that fires up at the firmament.”

“That’s right. Archangel,” Ron uttered. “That was you.”

“Not just us,” Avery interjected. “It was the brainchild of a man named Jacob Sin-”

“Sinclair,” Ron said. “I heard about him, too. Rich old Freemason and his private island.”

“That’s right,” Dominic replied.

“I heard he died from cancer a couple years ago.”

“Right again.”

“We all gotta go sometime,” Ron said, glancing down at the cigarette in his hand.

“What was it like up there? Being that close to the dome?”

Dominic rubbed the back of his head, gathering his thoughts. “Amazing. Unlike anything I’ve ever experienced. A part of me felt like I’d died and had ascended to heaven, or was caught between that and earth.”

Ron removed a photograph from the wall and handed it to Dominic. Dominic studied the high resolution image of the firmament.

“This was taken by a friend of ours,” he

said. "A man named Marc Grissom. He was killed on the Archangel mission just minutes after this."

"Other men also died," Avery added. "Good men."

"I've seen the video," Ron said. "It's the smoking gun that proves the truth about the earth. I don't care what the mainstream media says about it."

"What we didn't know at the time was that someone on our team had been programmed by the Elite as a spy," Dominic explained. "They compromised the mission and reported out location. The Pulsar struck the aircraft and killed everyone except for myself."

Ron leaned back in his chair and exhaled cigarette smoke.

"Son of a bitch," he mumbled under his breath.

"We've been trying to locate the weapon ever since, but haven't been able," Avery explained. "So have others in our group. America, Canada, Europe. We've searched everywhere, but have come up empty."

"What are you going to do once you find it?"

"Destroy it."

"How?" Ron asked.

"That depends," Dominic replied. "We need to find out more about it first. Its size,

accessibility, weaknesses, security, everything. But most importantly, we need to know it's location.”

“I'll do better than that. I'll show you.” Ron pulled his chair up to his computer desk and typed into the keypad. Within moments, he accessed a file containing a series of images appeared on the monitor. Dominic and Avery leaned in to see a tower-like object in the midst of a strange looking field.

“What are we looking at?” Avery asked.

“It. The weapon,” Ron responded. He zoomed in. More details emerged, revealing a frightening, metallic structure that appeared to be hundreds of feet tall. Mirrored, rectangular plates surrounded the pulsar on every side.

A chill ran up Dominic's spine.

“This is it,” Avery affirmed. “This is the thing the Elite's have been using to try and crack the firmament.”

“And the thing that killed your friends,” Ron added.

“How did you get these photos?” Dominic asked.

“Like I said, I have a network.”

“So do we, but ours hasn't been able to locate this pulsar.”

“Let's just say, it was an accidental discovery,” Ron explained.

“Where's it located?” Avery asked.

“I was just getting to that.” Ron opened up a schematic of an azimuthal equidistant projection on another monitor.

He programmed coordinates into the circular world map and it zeroed in a particular .

Dominic and Avery watched over the man's shoulder at the isolated portion of the wilderness region.

“There you go,” Ron said.

“Alaska,” Dominic uttered, his eyes meeting Avery's. “It's in Alaska.”

Ron transferred the file onto a black flash drive, then handed it to Dominic. “Here. Take this. It contains everything you need to locate the Pulsar. What happens after that is up to you.”

Dominic took the object. “Thanks.”

“How did you get the intel?” Avery asked.

“I have connections, too,” Ron explained. “Just like you. Friends in various places.”

“You'd be a good addition to our group,” Dominic replied. “We could use someone like you. Someone dedicated to the truth.”

“No offense, but I'm not looking to be part of group. I spend most of my time researching.”

“That's what we need,” Avery interjected.

“I don't want to work for anyone,” Ron said. “I'm self-employed.”

“All we ask is that you talk to our leader, Vanguard. Our goals are one and the same. Exposing the lies of the Elite and awakening the masses before it's too late.”

Ron rubbed his bearded chin for several moments. “Alright. I guess that's the least I can do since you came all this way for information, not knowing if I would kill you.”

Dominic and Avery walked towards the door.

“We'll be in touch in a few days,” Dominic said. “Think about what we said.”

Ron gave a nod, following them to the door. He unlocked it and opened the door just enough for them to exit.

Dominic and Avery stepped out of the trailer and back into the bright outdoors.

“The pulsar,” Ron said.

The couple turned.

“Destroy it for all of us,” Ron added.

“We will,” Avery replied.

Dominic gave one final nod before the door closed. He heard it lock before they stepped off the porch and down onto the ground.

The gate surrounding the trailer closed behind them as they went. Dominic and Avery retraced their steps, collected their instruments from the wooded area and returned to the SUV.

Several days after departing eastern Colorado and returning to their base, Dominic and Avery assembled a small team. Joined by Stryker and Plexy, they formulated a plan to destroy the Pulsar. Their friend and expert pilot Tex flew them from Oregon to a secret landing strip in Alaska, where they boarded a helicopter.

The chopper carrying the team flew over the Alaskan wilderness. Inside, Dominic, Avery, Stryker, Plexy and their comrade Aaron were suited up and ready.

“ETA, three minutes,” Tex announced as they neared the site.

“Get ready,” Avery instructed the others.

Stryker smiled from ear to ear. “Let’s crush this thing.”

“Yeah!!” Plexy added with adrenaline in his voice.

Dominic gazed out the window at the night sky. Before long, a tall structure could be seen in the distance offset by pulsating red lights.

He whispered a quiet prayer, silently preparing himself for the mission.

The story continues in **THE VERTICON GATE**  
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