



THE 96 CARAT CHIVOR EMERALD

Blaze the Path

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

—ROBERT FROST, "The Road Not Taken"

One of my earliest treasure hunting memories took place the summer I was seven. As the sun baked hot from its high arc above, I knelt with stick in hand, dirt clumped under my fingernails, digging and scratching away at a red dirt embankment. I had walked down the sloped street in front of my parents' small three-bedroom suburban home to the cul-de-sac below. From there, I'd taken a sharp left, crossed the gravelly pavement and stepped onto a barely worn path, mostly used by the dogs that barked, as they ran in packs around our neighborhood. The trail followed a metal chain-linked fence for a ways. Once past the fence, the path continued a little longer, before ending abruptly at an empty lot. This lot was my excavation site.

Here, I dug and dug and dug. The pile of finger-sized rocks I had amassed was sorely unimpressive. Yet, my enthusiasm did not wane. Dislodging a rock,