As a child, I put my hand between its teeth, dropped coins down its throat to make it roar.

Pillared in the museum lobby: open-jawed bust of a saber-toothed cat, not a Sphinx but a Cerberus guarding the fossilized dead. Through rooms of wire-strung bones and taxidermied beasts, I was drawn to dioramas like a light-mired moth, pressing the buttons to hear their worlds described in tinny voices limned with prehistoric lore as I held the bulky headphones tighter to my human ears. This felid, scalpel-mouthed and fierce, once stalked giant sloths. Once was taken by the tar pits, bubbling cuspids, thick with tusks and fangs. Once snarling dire wolves watched the stuck cat yowl. How I could hear the ghost-growls echo through museum walls, each fossil-body rigid with the sound. Small mammal that I was, pennies in my pocket as the exit loomed.