THANKS TO LEIBNIZ,
PUTATIVE FATHER OF
TOPOLOGY

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Topology is sometimes defined as the study of those properties of an object which remain unchanged when that object is subjected to stretching, shrinking, and twisting without tearing, piecing, or gluing.
—Introduction to General Topology by K. D. Joshi

Thirty Years’ War, 1618–1648

It is not obvious the underwear stays on unless at least one leg of jeans untubes one thigh. You think there would be a special mode of bend,
a dispensation. Hip-fishing tights under trousers, tees under wool, *ibid.* It took a man nursed in war to tell me I have to get naked in order. When horses became meat, then shoes became meat, to think what a ring in the mind could do without breaking —

that circles are cloaked lines glued long before the first clock told the first pale general, *sleep.*
The iron accounts of a number-man’s eye

without bread for weeks, the bright reveal that eye fell grateful into —
what one later called
the heart of the heart
of the country, meaning an answer dead-plum-toned, unable to rip out. What you could call a showing. In sleek present, in rumple before coffee, how I smell you on my top and bottom as jacked goods obtained through slats of soft fence. It’s only half the work to say, “you cannot sip yolk from a whole shell.”
You must also say, “unwrap, Sister Package. Mother Envelope, tear off your tongue. Hooks for coats will not let me touch you, dearest shawl, until the leather bomber takes its neck off your collar’s blue-black modesty.”