A Dream of Psychoanalysis

I enter a “Holistic Center” for the first time and an analyst named Gary who wears large, round glasses informs me that he has prepared an “area” for me.

The area is furnished with small desks and daybeds that resemble prison cots.

Three or four men and women are already there, looking comfortable.

I am asked to sit on the mat in the center of the area.

I am content because, having been concerned about being unable to hear properly, I feel assured that from this position I will hear and be heard clearly.

Moreover, I feel confident that the terrible child with one, single, extraordinary eyebrow, who is always cutting in and out of my telephone calls from some location I shall never discover, will not be able to interfere.

Gary says, “I can assure you that what you will face here is a very different kind of enemy.”
I sense immediately that Gary is knowledgeable about my enemy and about what I will face.

The session begins with a question about a yarn bracelet I am wearing.

I respond in lies and half-truths, stories about the bracelet’s origin and meaning I’ve repeated so often I cannot remember, myself, whether they are false or true.

After I finish speaking, perhaps because I am lying, Gary ceases to pay attention to me.

The others in the area either have departed or have been extinguished from my consciousness.

I am suddenly aware that I can hear, through the thin walls, three or four other sessions going on at the same time.

I complain about this lack of confidentiality.

Gary mumbles something about “research purposes.”

I then notice the playing of psychedelic music, as if it were being piped in through a set of invisible speakers.

I complain again, this time about the invasive music, to which Gary responds by pacing around the area.

But Gary does not remain in the area.

Rather, he conducts personal errands that are both inside and outside the area:

He remains with me but also goes to the ATM.

He gets gas.
He buys fast food.

He paces.

I wonder, “Is all of this part of the analysis?”

I ask Gary, “Can you tell me when we began, so I know when the session will be over?”

Gary tells me the incorrect time.

I know he has told me the incorrect time, so I ask again.

Now Gary is enraged and flips me off angrily, with both hands, while tucking himself into a small cubicle made of white foam-board.

I have had enough.

I scream, “Fuck you!” and “Fuck this!” and begin to feel very sorry for myself, which is a pleasurable, even ecstatic, feeling, as if I were finally able to register that a hurtful thing was happening to me.

In spite of this pleasure, or because of it, I try to leave the “Holistic Center,” but am held back by several enormous attendants, who mock my complaint about being flipped off, as if it were my fault, as if I had misunderstood the meaning of the gesture.

They shout, “You are missing the boat, you fat fuck!”

I am, at this moment, primarily upset that these fat men think I am fat.

But I am also lucid enough to realize — now without the pleasure — that I am being abused.
The problem is that I have no idea how to act in relation to this abuse.

That is, I do not know how to avoid giving the abusers the satisfaction of proving me to be stupid, wrong, or weak, without, at the same time, giving up my own true hope that the abuse is good for me, which is identical to the wish that my abusers and my abuse will offer me answers, comforts, and other crucial things I need, which, of course, can only be delivered if I submit myself to “the process.”