



L'année dernière à Marienbad

Alain Robbe-Grillet

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From Reader Review L'année dernière à Marienbad for online ebook

Tosh says

This is the film script for 'Last Year at Marienbad.' Which by the way is the ultimate European art flick. In other words the worst nightmare if you are a Michael Bay or current fan of Hollywood blockbusters.

There is no action whatsoever, in fact there is even little dialogue. Mostly elegant people wearing very elegant suits and dresses - with tons of moody shots at a very cold looking castle. Chic is too small a word for this film. It's uber-sophisticated to a degree that is almost unhuman. It is one of my favorite films.

Jesse says

Called a screenplay, but is it? It's what novelist Alain Robbe-Grillet submitted to filmmaker Alain Resnais (who then turned it into one of the most beguiling films in all of cinema); before its publication Robbe-Grillet returned to it and altered some elements that had been subtly changed by Resnais in the translation to the screen. Even still—and I'm confident this was quite intentional on the writer's part—undeniable differences remain between "screenplay" and film (a pearl bracelet, constant suggestions for a nonexistent atonal soundtrack, an explicit depiction of rape).

So is it a screenplay, a novel, a novel about the act of making a film, a film a novel about the act of writing for film? (The "official" interpretation, whether helpful or not, printed boldly on the cover: "text by Alain Robbe-Grillet for the film by Alain Resnais." But even this is misleading—it is *not* the text submitted for filming, but a text rewritten in response to the completed film.) I tend to agree with Jean-Louis Leutrat in *L'Année dernière à Marienbad*: what we have here is in fact "two quasi-simultaneous and inseparable works" that are "at once divergent and complimentary." And here we are, stranded in the labyrinth of topics and issues that I hope to address and explore in my graduate studies. I've managed to stumble in—will there be a way out?

"One of the two works (but which?) would be a rewrite of the other; and not just because, using its own means, the one translates the other." -Leutrat

The main question, or at least the only one I was able to articulate through this reading: these differences, these slippages, are they points of reverberation or of resistance? In the process of mutual translation, the echos add (reveal?) new facets, new points of entry into the maze, but one thing is clear: the act of mutual translation does *not* clear up any of the mystery, but only push both further along into the shadowlands of unknowability. One wishes that the "original" text submitted to be filmed was available; one is aware, however, that it would clarify exactly nothing. But should clarity really be required from two works that presumably strive to clarify a narrative, but in the end only reveal that clarity is in fact an impossibility?

"X: You weren't waiting for anything any more. It was as if you were dead... That's not true! You are still alive. You are here. I see you. You remember. (Brief pause.) That's not true... probably. You've already forgotten everything."

Dan says

i wonder if this is Grillet's take on Sartre's hell.

Evan says

[placeholder review]

I remember when this was shown in film class in college I walked out in the middle of it. Right in front of the professor. I liked the professor. I liked the class. I liked the films. I liked Alain Resnais films, even *Muriel*. I liked difficult "foreign" films. Just not this difficult. Usually it was the other kids who walked out, but this time it was me doing the walking. I think some of it had to do with the fact it was the end of the semester and I was just plum tuckered out.

This was not the first time such a thing had happened. I missed a final in newspaper layout and design, deliberately, in favor of sleeping in. I managed to talk the hard-assed old professor into letting me retake it. He told me he must have been mellowing, because in the past he would have told me, tough shit, you missed, you lose. Of course, I asked my buddies what had been on the test. They told me and I studied those parts. Those parts were on it. I passed easily.

For my final film class, I had made a film that was shown for my final grade. I didn't show up for the screening. I still got an A. I just didn't want to see my amateurish stuff in a room full of people. I think I slept in.

Another time, I skipped a Spanish quiz to go fishing on the lakefront. My Spanish professor saw me in an elevator one day and asked me where I was during the test. I straight-out told her I'd gone fishing.

I was kind of like Tom Sawyer at college. I didn't want to watch a movie about a lot of bored elites in a geometrically arrayed antiseptic hell speaking in tongues or not speaking at all. The sun was shining outside, and real life was out there.

Maybe now I can tackle this thing.

(KR@KY 2016)

Vernon Goddard says

This is my favourite film of all time. I went to see it in the 60s whilst at University in Cardiff. I was with some friends, all of us interested in foreign films and Gallois cigarettes.

It is an elegant, enigmatic but disturbing film. Shot entirely in Black & White, with the characters suitably attired in the conventions of a middle/upper class environment. The setting is a magnificent Mansion with incredible interiors and external shots of lawns and water features.

The French spoken is beautiful often poetic.

The characters seem pitted against each other as seen in the game of two-play!

The air of mystery, intrigue, the tensions of character are held throughout the film. There are very few who have seen it & can then explain what is going on. I believe books have been written to analyse what it is all about.

A must see film and a must read book.....

Scribble Orca says

The definitive and brilliant visual representation of the several facets of the nouveau roman occupying Robbe-Grillet. Preliminary reading of *La Jalousie* and *In The Labyrinth* provide essential keys to unlocking "meaning" from the film and its final ambiguous denouement. Robbe-Grillet was concerned with exploding narrative and demolishing the presence of an omnipotent author - the film closely follows R-G's script with only minor alterations, Resnais and Robbe-Grillet having worked independently on its realisation: visually appealing, stylised and stylish, mocking the facades which are so reverently presented; the use of mirrors, gardens, linearity and repetition producing the same surrealism and disorientation as found in Robbe-Grillet's oeuvre (particularly as depicted in *La Jalousie* and *Dans le Labyrinthe*); the personalities displayed as marionettes jerking to and validating the constraining strings of social convention. A unique and landmark production, the only jarring note being the dreadful, funereal organ; if the intent here was to continually grate upon the watcher's nerve, the score succeeded too well, at times destroying both the narrator's voice over and the dialogue as well as the immersion in the complexities of the film. Not so much lacking in layers of meaning as lavish in proffering.

Steven says

Classic sad story of love, duty, depression and war.

Thadd says

Although I liked this book, one that is packed with detail, it isn't fun to read because the story moves so slowly. Also, there isn't any humor or irony in it.

My guess is that the author feels that conversations, settings and memories are more important than a plot.
