Last Year at Marienbad

after Alain Resnais

Tell me how to make a bid against the probability of being frozen,

the way the sumac berries—I was waiting for you—
stayed so red in their clusters for a whole winter, and how love, too,
is that sleepy place of keeping still, or else

the one week of winter in summer, if we’re to believe
what other people say.

Or else we say nothing at all,
watching the actress look away from the drawing of the garden.
She forgets Karlstadt, Marienbad, Baden-Salsa,
or has never visited the château’s long corridors, forgets

the pitched seductions
amid statues, statues, fountains. All the ghosts of pearl,
their weather-talk. The lit chandeliers.

Rosencrantz (voice in the wilderness): . . . What’s the game?
Guildenstern: What are the rules?

Misère—
the games that are played to lose.

Pretend the voiceovers aren’t recounting every cabin we never
built. Or maybe we did. Maybe we spent a summer in some

pine-filled valley and made chairs with our hands.
It could be there still, beneath three feet of snow.

Consider all the rooms
that refuse us. The weather that outlasts us.