*Jacqueline m’a fait un autre cadeau, au début de l’été 1990.*

Jacqueline gave me another gift/present/presented me with another gift(,)

in the early summer of 1990/in early summer,1990/in the early summer 1990/

at the beginning/start of the summer of 1990/in the early part of the summer of 1990/in the early part of summer 1990.

*Depuis longtemps, elle me parlait de son autre filleul,*

For a long time/For quite some time,
she had been talking to me about/she had been speaking to me about/
she had talked to me about/she had spoken to me about/
she had been telling me (things) about/
She had long been talking to me about/She had long been speaking to me about/ She had long talked to me about/She had long spoken to me about/
She had long been telling me (things) about

her other godson,

*en disant que ce serait bien si nous faisions un jour connaissance.*

saying to/telling me that it would be good/nice/great/ saying to/telling me that it would be a good/nice/great idea if we

were to meet/if we met/if we could meet/for us to meet (each other/ one another)/make each other’s/one another’s acquaintance/become/became acquainted

some day/one day/someday.

*Mais dès qu’elle avait prononcé ces mots elle secouait la tête, se ravisait.*

But as soon as/the minute she (had) said/uttered

those/these/the words,

she shook/she would shake/she would be shaking her head,

changing her mind/having changed her mind/and change(d) her mind.

But hardly/barely had she said/uttered/would she have said/uttered those/the words when/

But no sooner had she said/uttered/would she have said/uttered those/the words than

she shook/she would shake/she would be shaking her head, changing her mind/having changed her mind/and change(d) her mind

*Est-ce que ce serait si bien ?*

Would it be that/so good/nice/great?/
Would it/that be such a good/nice/great idea/thing/ Would it/that be so good/nice/great an idea/a thing?

*Est-ce que vous auriez des choses à vous dire ?*

Would you have anything/(any) things to say to each other/one another/ Would you have anything/(any) things to talk about?

*Sans doute pas. C’est trop tôt.*

Probably not. It’s/It is too early.

*Cet été d’agonie, elle a jugé qu’il n’était plus trop tôt et m’a conseillé de l’appeler.*

During/In

That agonising/agony-filled/anguish-filled / excruciating/harrowing/torturous/tormenting summer/

that summer of agony/anguish/torment/

that agony of a summer,

she decided/deemed (that) it was no longer too early/

she decided/deemed (that) it was not/wasn’t too early anymore

and advised me to/and told me I should/and suggested/recommended (that) I (should)

call/(tele)phone/ring him/give him a call.

*Deux jours plus tard sonnait à la porte de notre appartement, rue de l’Ecole-de- Médecine, un garçon un peu plus âgé que moi*

Two days later,
the doorbell of our flat/apartment on/in Rue de l’Ecole-de-Médecine
was rung by/would be rung by/was being rung by/was to be rung by
a fellow/man/chap/guy (,) (who was) a little (bit)/slightly older than me
Two days later,
there was/would be a ring at the door/
somebody/someone rang/was ringing/would be ringing the doorbell
of our flat/apartment on/in Rue de l’Ecole-de-Médecine.
(It was) A fellow/man/chap/guy (,) (who was) a little (bit)/slightly older than me

*, les yeux bleus, les cheveux roux tirant sur le blanc*

, with blue eyes/blue-eyed
and (with) greying red/ginger hair/
and (with) (pale) red/ginger hair
that/which was greying/
that/which was turning/becoming grey/gray/white

*– ils sont tout à fait blancs aujourd’hui, Hervé vient d’avoir soixante ans.*

–/:/. it/It is now completely/totally grey/gray/white ,/since/as
Hervé (has) just turned sixty (years old).

*Le genre d’homme qui a longtemps l’air d’un petit garçon, tôt celui d’un vieillard, et jamais vraiment d’un adulte.*

(He is) The/That type/kind/sort of man

who/that

for a long time/up to a certain age

looks like/continues to look like/still looks like/has the look of/continues to have the look of/still has the look of

a little/wee/young/small boy (about him), early/soon like/that of an old-timer/
like/that of an old-timer at an early/a young age (,) and never really like/that of an adult/a grown-up/ and never really looks grown-up.

*Le genre d’homme qui au premier abord ne fait pas spécialement impression*

(He is) The/That type/kind/sort of man
who/that
doesn’t/does not make much of a first impression/
doesn’t/does not make a strong first impression/
doesn’t/does not make much of an impression initially/at first sight/ doesn’t/does not really impress you the first time you meet him