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Three things at your peril; sex on the beach in Saudi; punching a copper in Bulgaria, and disturbing a Frenchman having drinks on his yacht. We did the last.

Steaming up the Seine at 4 knots in dusk, we couldn't find the reverse button, so when we reached the tiny port we had to circle slowly round until the engine cut. The harbour was full of 18 story yachts all chrome, mahogany and plate glass. Ours was a converted Thames barge, 8ft tall and a list to the left as a deliberate statement of political affiliation. The squillionaires were out on their various decks, with their dazzling white shorts gold braided baseball caps, and drinks in their hand. As we appeared to be on a collision course with the Duc de Pissoir, we sounded our klaxon and they dropped their canapés, spilled their drinks and threw fenders over the side at the anticipated point of impact. Anyway we missed.

But we hit the next one.

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