

29.09.09 by Sarah Sands

Heed the omens, Mandy — above all, fear Caesar

Do come to dinner — don't mention the flies

The local councils' initiative to put a slop bucket in every home is expected to save £200 million in landfill costs and make us feel more virtuous. I must urge caution. We boastfully introduced the slop bucket into our household some months ago. It is automatic to throw in fruit and veg and tea bags. As the summer has lengthened, so the bucket has become a meeting place for fruit flies and guest insects. Once the autumn invasion of spiders arrives, I expect them to hop in there too.

It is slightly embarrassing to ask people round to supper when the kitchen looks like a Tangiers dive, with a vortex of flies spinning round the slop bucket. Outside, my wormery has also attracted a hideous infestation of other insects. What if all the savings and goodwill that come with the slop bucket is undone by the health and safety officers declaring kitchens unsuitable for human habitation?

* The appeal of Dans Le Noir, the dark restaurant in [Clerkenwell](#) which is reportedly a favourite dining place for [Prince William](#) and Kate, is said to be the strengthening of other senses. According to the reviews, "darkness leads to truthfulness about taste and lets you face the realities of ingredients and cuisine".

I only know it as a place for teenage birthday parties. The hosts choose it less for the realities of ingredients and more for the Blind Man's Bluff possibilities. Teenage boys tell me that it increases their chances of action if their female neighbours cannot see them. I do hope they don't accidentally grab hold of the future King.