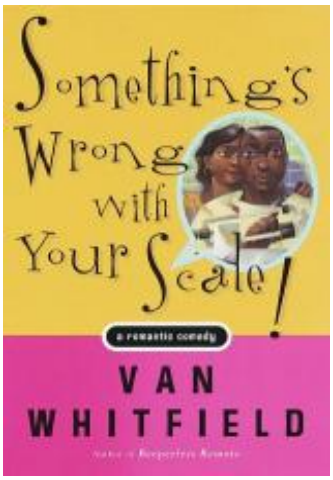
# Something's Wrong with Your Scale!

by Van Whitfield




## About the Book

Van Whitfield's first novel, *Beeperless Remote,* originally published in paperback in 1996, was an underground sensation. Following its successful hardcover publication the following year, this Blackboard and Emerge bestseller placed Van Whitfield among the ranks of a cadre of young up-and-coming African-American male writers such as Omar Tyree and Eric Jerome Dickey. Now, in *Something'S Wrong With Your Scale,* Whitfield exercises his comedic flair in a universal tale of two people who meet and fall in love at a weight-loss center.

Meet Sonny Walker, a thirty-something-Mr. Nice Guy who's found companionship and comfort with Marsha. The only problem is that he's become too comfortable. Weighing seventy-five pounds more than when the courtship first began, the newly food-obsessed Sonny just can't stay away from Marsha's marvelous pie, even in the middle of their breakup conversation.

Determined to slim down and get his girlfriend back, Sonny joins the FutraSystem weight-loss center and meets potential love interest Kayla, as well as a host of other colorful characters. In a heartwarming tale that is alternately hilarious, wise, and ultimately self-affirming, Whitfield has created a thoroughly delicious and engaging novel sure to be enjoyed by those who have waged the battle of the bulge, or know someone who has.

## Discussion Guide

**1.**Sonny Walker, the lead character in Something's Wrong with Your Scale!, is dropped by his girlfriend Marsha because he gained too much weight. Is Marsha wrong for dropping him, or should she be viewed in a positive light for being honest and straightforward? How could Marsha have better handled the situation? If you were involved with someone who had gained a significant amount of weight over the course of the relationship, would it be a problem? How would you respond if you thought a mate or potential mate were overweight?

**2.** Kayla Jennings, Sonny's new love interest, is portrayed as an intelligent, successful, overweight woman. How would you describe her relationship with Jonathan James Leslie? Considering her achievements, is her relationship with Sonny, a low-level employee at The Sports Authority, realistic? During a phone call, Sonny calls her, "The big girl." How did you feel about this statement, particularly since Sonny has a weight problem of his own?

**3.** When Sonny and Kayla first dine out at Leon's Eat & Weigh Kountry Buffet, they are insulted by a waiter and his brother. How do you feel about that incident and Kayla and Sonny's response? Are you aware of incidents of this sort? Have you ever been out with someone who was clearly overeating and was insulted by the wait staff or by other customers in the restaurant? If so, how did that make you feel? Do you think that people who are overweight are sometimes treated unfairly?

**4.** Chet and E, Sonny's closest friends, are depicted as acknowledging Sonny's weight problem, yet they have disdain for overweight people. Are their attitudes typical? How would you handle a friend who discrimates against a particular group of people to which you also happen to belong? Did Sonny overreact the night he and his friends were drinking?

**5.**Like Shawn in Beeperless Remote, Sonny is dropped by a woman he cares about, yet he never tells his closest friends. Is this typical of the men you know? Who do men talk to when they have concerns about their relationships?

**6.** Van Whitfield said that while interviewing people for Something's Wrong with Your Scale! he found that overweight people were often not attracted to other overweight people. How do you explain this? What do you suppose are the issues regarding overweight people and romance? Are those with weight problems perceived as especially romantic or particularly unromantic?

**7.** In one sequence, Kayla says that other people had a bigger problem with her weight than she did. How do you think those with weight problems are perceived by others? How do you think they perceive themselves? Are you uncomfortable with overweight people? If you had a friend that you thought was overweight, but who didn't seem bothered by it, would you address it?

**8.** In a scene at Sonny's job, he is asked to pose as a "jumbo family-sized tent." Do you think overweight people are subjected to workplace ridicule more than those without weight problems? How are those with weight problems perceived in the workplace? Could a weight problem cause one to miss out on a promotion? Do you think a subordinate sees a supervisor with a weight problem as a competent supervisor or as "just another fat person?"

**9.** Did Something's Wrong with Your Scale! affect your perception of people with weight concerns and the problems they endure? Do you feel the book would be beneficial to younger people with weight problems?

**10.** Van Whitfield has been hailed for his unique writing style and use of metaphors and humor. How would you define his style? Is his use of dialogue realistic and/or effective? How, if at all, does Sonny's tone differ from Shawn Wayne's in Beeperless Remote? What are the strengths of Van's style and what might be his shortcomings?

## Author Bio

Van Whitfield is the author of **Beeperless Remote**, **Something's Wrong with Your Scale!**, and **Guys in Suits**. The award-winning author writes BET's hit profile show, *TurnStyle*, and is currently writing the authorized biography of former Washington, D.C., mayor, Marion Barry.

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**Publication Date:** January 19, 1999
**Hardcover:** 304 pages
**Publisher:** Doubleday
**ISBN-10:** 0385489358
**ISBN-13:** 9780385489355