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We will be greeted as liberators...

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## Weighty Decisions

■ *Even a mother has trouble loving a crude gift offering. So choose wisely.*

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I think you're going to love it," beamed Hubby, proudly producing a slovenly-wrapped box on the morning of Mother's Day.

It was huge. Not that I'm obsessive about weight, but heck, even the box looked like it needed to lose a few.

What was it? Certainly not jewelry – gold baubles never weighed in like this, not even if they were encrusted with generous bits of the Hope diamond. A full-length fur coat was out of the question in these PC times, and he knew better than to give me a blender – didn't he?

Finally wrenched from the bowels of the box, there it glared: A super-duper, multi-setting-for-a-small-tribal-village ... bathroom scale.

I smiled, feeling my top lip stick to my teeth. I managed to squeak, "Honey? How, um, very thoughtful."

Swollen with either pride or breakfast, he said, "Sweetie, you've been screaming at your old scale every morning – I knew you needed this."

I needed gout first. I needed leprosy more. But I didn't tell him that.

Nor did I tell him that half the point of weighing in IS about the screaming, about the vicious name calling and the threats on one's life. And that would all be from the scale's point of view. I won't even start to talk about my own behavior.

So here's the issue: I have an itty-bitty problem when it comes to weight. Weight issues may be new to some women oh, let's say, on Mars and sure, why should they worry? They don't have to grapple with gravity – but

for most of us girthinglings: Dieting is huge.

The next morning, I bit the non-carb bullet and got on the Thing. I gasped. It was worse than the first sight of Oprah after she'd gained all her weight back. The number flashing at me was eight pounds over.

I jumped off as if the bottoms of my feet had just met molten lard.

"What's wrong?" said Hubby, rushing in after the third high-pitched scream. I pointed to the Thing. "Get on it. Now."

The eight-pound overage registered for him as well. I felt a glow of triumph, not unlike the time I talked my son into sampling one pea. I grinned as Hubby tried to apologize.

"Nonsense, Honey." I said, my coat and purse already over one arm. "I'm off to return it – hand over the receipt."

"But, sweetheart" he said, his face showing more disappointment than when his daughter learned she couldn't keep a pony in her room. "I threw the box away last night."

"Not to worry. No matter how thin I get, I'll always be able to throw my weight around a sales floor."

After checking to make sure that there were women behind the register, I marched directly to the back counter of the fancy-schmancy gizmo store where Hubby first lost his head.

"Hello, ladies," I said, holding the Thing far out in front of me, as if it reeked of warm Gouda – "this is what my husband gave me for Mother's Day."

They gasped. They clutched at themselves. They made that strangulated cluck

sound with their tongues.

Finally, one of them spoke. "And he's still alive?" she asked, taking the Thing from me as quickly as possible.

I nodded, at the same time offering up the credit card for her to reverse the charge.

"The last time he gave me a gift without female intervention was ten years ago. It was a Kitchen-Aid MixMaster. Given to me on the night of our nuptials. But so great was my love, I decided against holding it against him personally. Literally."

"He must be worth his weight in gold."

"I checked that fact with this very scale and yes, he is. And because of that, I'm going to give him one more chance. But after that, I'm returning the favor – and will get him something just as nice on the day of our divorce."

