

Say I do

By A. C. Zito

"But Mom,"

"I get it, Gerald, Gucci gang, Gucci gang, Gucci gang! I'm hip! I'm part of the *in*-crowd! I know how to pop X's or whatever that means. But seriously, Gerald, does it mean pop a wheelie on your little scooter toy? You know what, honey? Never mind, just pick out what Capri Sun you want your mommy to pack in your lunch box for school tomorrow."

I looked over at the cute, little family at the grocery store in the juice aisle and sighed.

"I want that, Carlos. I want a family. I want to have kids and bring them to school and pack their lunches!"

"Ok," said Carlos. He didn't seem to be paying much attention. I *saw* what he was doing! He was checking out another girl's *rack*!

"*Carlos Vinciotti!* You're a child; can't you just grow up? Can't you be like your older brother, Damien, who's taking over your dad's pizza restaurant? There's *two*, baby! Your dad has *two*! One for Damien and one for *you*! But Damien's taking over both of them. Can't you see how messed up that is?" Carlos wasn't paying attention to me... *again*. He was too busy chugging the *Sunkist* we haven't even *bought* yet! "Babe... babe... put it down. Don't finish the sodas before we leave the store again. I want some too." Carlos put it down; did the thing with his fingers to make a circle; I, of course, looked down at it resting on his knee; he smiled at me; punched me *really* hard on the arm; and then quickly picked up the bottle of *Sunkist* and started chugging it *way* too fast for me to do anything about it. Before I could wrestle the bottle out of his hands, he was already finished; the whole *two liter* bottle... *finished!*

"You want to hear how loud I can burp?"

"No, Carlos," I frowned at him, crossing my arms to let him know I mean business.

"*Roberta Hathaway*; you're the four-time Smith High School World Champion at belching! Ms. Hathaway's never turned down once in her life, ever; has never passed up the possibility to get to hear a good, solid belch!"

"But Carlos, that was eight *years* ago! You're my high school sweetheart! We've known each other since when we were little and played together in the kiddy pool! I'm grown-up now, Carlos, baby! Why haven't you?" Carlos looked like he was about to be sick. I knew he shouldn't have had that much soda in one sitting.

"You want to be... *Mrs. Roberta Hathaway*?" I let out a sigh as I angrily shot back:

"No, Carlos! I want to be Mrs. Roberta *Vinciotti!*" Carlos didn't seem to understand.

"But that's *my* last name..." I was ready to walk out of his life right then and there.

“Wait, baby...” I didn’t want to turn around as he tried calling me back. I knew he was just going to let out that belch he’d been holding in. But I couldn’t resist one last goodbye before I walked out of his life forever and ever.

“Goodbye...” I started to say as I began turning around. I looked down to see him on one knee. His shirt was unbuttoned to show his rock-hard abs. And written on them in whipped cream was:

*Marry me?* He had the biggest diamond ring held out in front of me that I’d ever seen in my entire life.

“Baby, I didn’t want that second pizza restaurant because that was never my dream. It had always been Damien’s. And I’ve finally saved up enough money to stop teaching surfing lessons and buy that skate shop I’ve always wanted. I already have the name picked out: *Carlos and RB*. Babe, you’ve always been my little RB sandwich. From the moment I hit puberty I just wanted to eat you up, but, of course, thought you still had cuties. But then, when I got into high school, it finally dawned on me what cuties were *all along*: it meant that you were *cute!* And from that point on we’ve been inseparable ever since. Will you be inseparable with me forever and ever, babe? Make my wildest dreams come true; be my Bonnie, and I’ll be your Clyde, and we’ll lay *waste* to some sick halfpipe shocks.” I didn’t care that I was getting gross whipped cream all over my cute blouse. I just *had* to smother my Carlos with kisses and kisses. Because he’s mine, and he’ll be that way forever and ever!