

I am deeply honoured to have been invited here to launch *Further Fables Queer and Familiar*. Whew. It's a lot of pressure.

Seeing as I've got the microphone, I thought I'd take the liberty of speaking about what the book means to me. As a queer person, unless you're very lucky, you don't have queer relatives. No queer grannies in my family. And it's easy to float through a queer life only knowing and speaking to your queer peers. Which is such a loss! We lose the opportunities to hear about the way that our lives are similar and different, and to learn about whose shoulders we're standing on. Who fought, sacrificed and died so that we can enjoy substantive legal equality and lives freer of prejudice and violence.

In saying that I am lucky enough to have many adoptive queer grannies, several of whom are in this room. These adoptions haven't been certified by the state because, you know, state sanctioned relationships are pretty overrated. But they are no less valid!

Julia and Anne feel like they're my adoptive queer grannies. But I also see myself in them and hope that my grand mothering might look something like theirs someday. Passionate and political and loving and flexible. What I love about *Further fables* is that I see myself in the grannies, I see myself in their kids Tarca and Sand and I even see myself in their grandchild Victoria. And this seeing is brought to life by Chia's illustrations which capture the characters with tenderness and heart-warming silliness.

In this book I see the ways that experiences of queerness and feminism in Adelaide are similar and different across the generations including the tensions between those generations that feel like they all exist inside of me. And I see the ways that all families are similar and different. For me this book encapsulates the idea of *communitas*- unity in diversity. And feels like an invitation to all of us to be telling queer fables of our families.

So enough of my mushy rambling. We are here for the business of launching! And I contemplated what would be the queerest and silliest way to conduct launch (because life's pretty serious and we all need a bit more fun).

So first I pulled a Tarot card to bless this book as it goes out into the world. 10 of pentacles. A card of abundance. The culmination of hard work. And legacy. This card is often read as referring to family legacy- which I think is appropriate- these grannies are fighting to save the most important inheritance that their grandchildren will inherit- the earth. But I think it speaks also to the political queer legacy too. The legacy of making queer families and lesbian grannies visible and all the things that that makes possible for future generations who get to see their stories reflected back at them. So you can let that percolate. See where it takes you.

And now I'd like to invite my assistants to the stage to ceremonially launch *Further Fables* with sensible shoes and 100% recycled, biodegradable, homemade confetti. And I need all of you to join me. On the count of 3 I want everyone to say "climate action now" and feel free to ad lib your own whoop after that. 1, 2, 3 Climate Action Now.

[Rosie empties an old boot full of confetti into the air]

Consider this book most formally launched!

Rosanna Maeder, Adelaide 23/11/19