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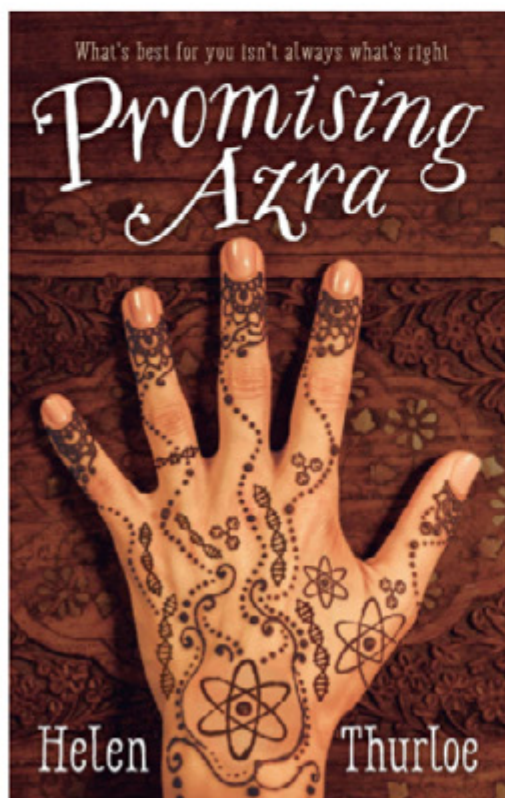
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# PROMISING AZRA BY HELEN THURLOE



## Promising Azra Helen Thurloe (Allen & Unwin)

### Judges' Comments

Azra is a typical sixteen-year-old. She has lots of friends, is doing well at school and has dreams of going to university to study science, a subject she is passionate about. Much to her delight, she is chosen for the team to compete in the interschool science competition, something sweetened by the presence of Pratik, a student from the neighbouring boy's school to whom Azra is quickly drawn. But Azra has another life. Her deeply conservative parents see education as wasted on a girl and have arranged for her to marry a man in Pakistan she has never met.

On face value, *Promising Azra* is an engaging and often amusing story for young adults. It is, however, much more profound than this. Without being didactic, it contains important messages for young girls caught between the demands of their parents' culture and a desire to chart their own life. Significantly, it tackles the challenging issue of forced marriage with sensitivity, providing invaluable information for young women confronting this situation and those seeking to help them.