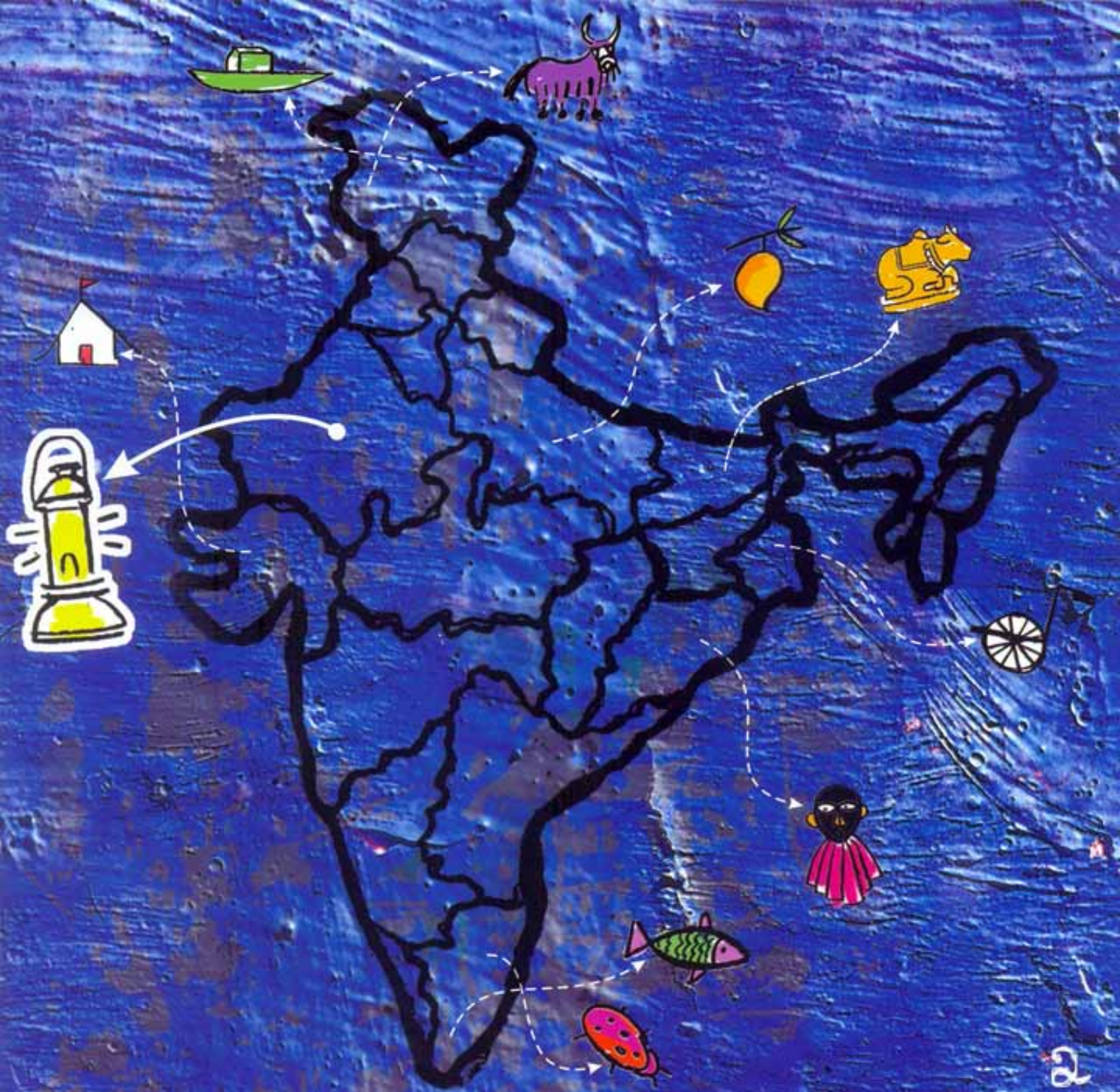
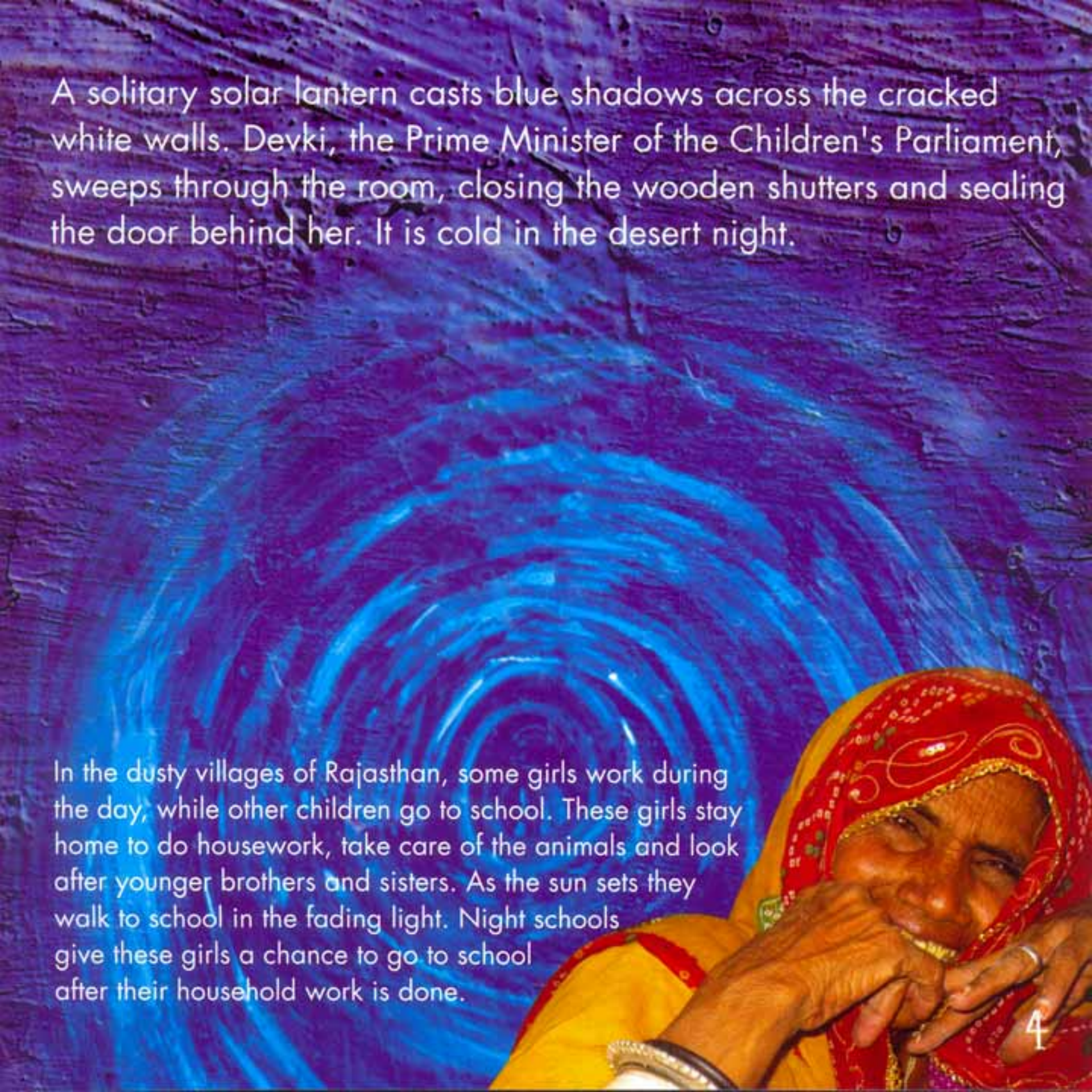


GOING TO SCHOOL IN THE DARK



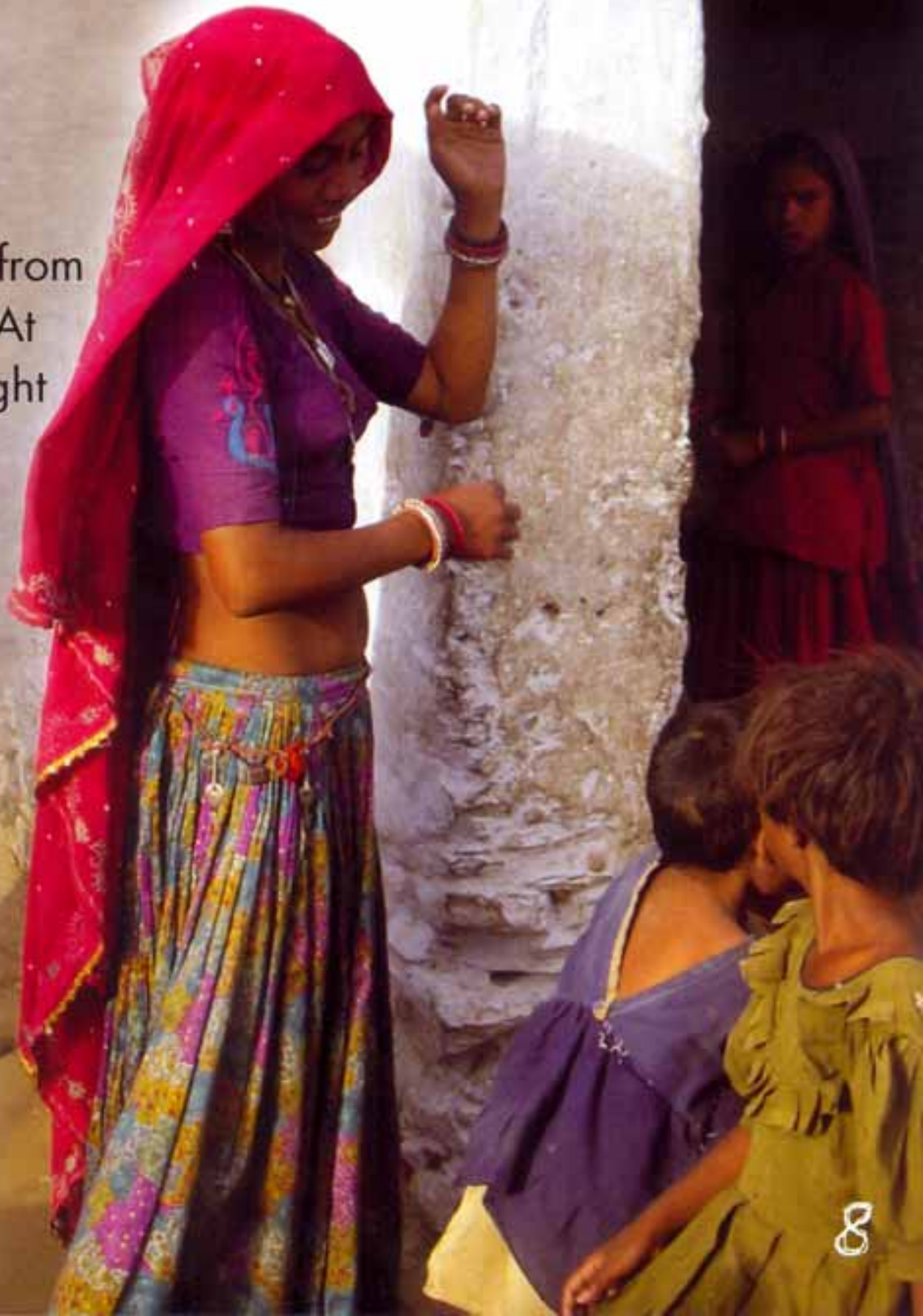


A woman wearing a yellow sari and a red headscarf with gold patterns is smiling and resting her chin on her hands. The background is a large, textured blue circular pattern that resembles a ripple in water or a stylized sun. The overall scene is set against a dark, textured background.

A solitary solar lantern casts blue shadows across the cracked white walls. Devki, the Prime Minister of the Children's Parliament, sweeps through the room, closing the wooden shutters and sealing the door behind her. It is cold in the desert night.

In the dusty villages of Rajasthan, some girls work during the day, while other children go to school. These girls stay home to do housework, take care of the animals and look after younger brothers and sisters. As the sun sets they walk to school in the fading light. Night schools give these girls a chance to go to school after their household work is done.

During the day, solar lanterns store energy from the harsh desert sun. At night they light the night schools with a fluorescent, ghostly light.



Devki is tired from her long day, but to make her dream of opening more night schools come true she needs to ask more questions. "Who lives next to someone who does not go to school?" Hands go up, hats rustle. "If you know someone who does not go to school, can you bring them with you next time?" Everyone nods, but a few girls turn around to watch the door. Santosh, age 13, a minister in Devki's cabinet, is standing shyly next to a smiling man. Devki nods and starts to ask another question, but the girls are no longer listening. They watch the man disappear behind a blackboard. Suddenly a puppet pops up, whirling his head wildly from side to side. Devki rocks back on her heels, knowing her questions will have to wait for another night.