

The background features a vibrant teal and light blue color palette with a radial burst pattern emanating from the center. Scattered throughout are numerous white and light blue stars of varying sizes. The text 'NINJA GIRL' is prominently displayed in the center. 'NINJA' is rendered in a bold, purple, 3D block font, while 'GIRL' is in a bright yellow, 3D block font. The letters have a slight shadow, giving them a floating appearance.

NINJA
GIRL



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ANH DO NINJA GIRL



Illustrated by
JAMES HART

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ONE

I just found out my parents aren't **really** who I thought they are.

And while finding out you're adopted is a **truly** big deal, it's not even the most surprising thing that's happened to me this week!

Maybe I should **rewind** a little . . .



My name is Niki, and I'm **about** ten.



I say 'about ten' because since I **found out** I was adopted, my real birthday is a bit of a mystery. Suddenly, the last birthday card I got makes a lot **more sense!**



Anyway, I live in Green Valley, which used to be a quiet little town—but things have gotten a lot more **hectic** around here lately. It all started a few days ago when I was **playing tips** with my friends.



Nearby, the school gardener, Mr Mick, was planting shrubs in a garden bed. He took great pride in his gardens, and he sure didn't like it when I accidentally **crashed into a bush!**



WHOOOPS! I had always been a bit clumsy.

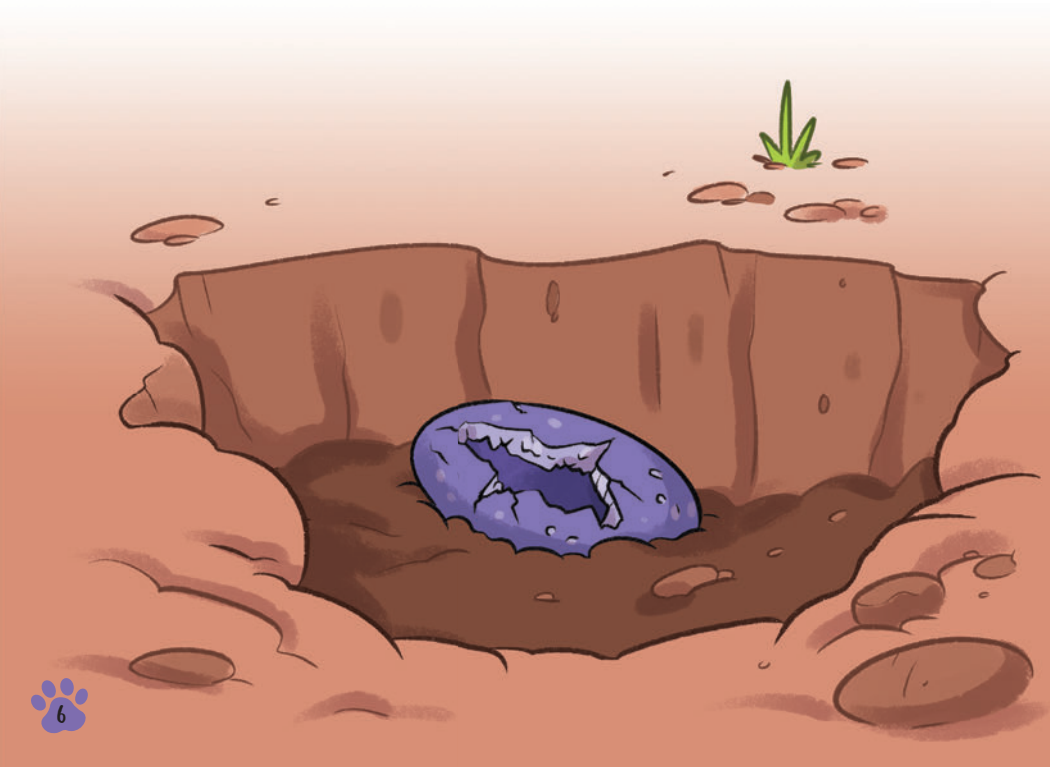
‘Sorry, Mr Mick,’ I said as I picked leaves out of my hair.

‘Niki Dawson!’ exclaimed Mr Mick. But then he got distracted when he spotted something **strange** in the dirt.

‘Well, dip me in vinegar and call me a **PICKLE**,’ he said.

‘What is it?’ I asked, crouching beside him.

‘Don’t touch it!’ Mr Mick said. ‘I think it might be a **very rare** kind of **gem**.’



The purple gem had strange **crystal** flecks sticking out of its surface.

‘Niki,’ said Mr Mick urgently, ‘please run and get the principal **right away!**’

It turned out that the **gem** was a very rare find. After I told the principal about it, she made a phone call to the **Green Valley Museum** and they sent a special team to take it away.



Word spread quickly throughout the school. The other kids were **disappointed** they didn't get to see the gem. They crowded around me, asking questions.



Dale said it could have come from **outer space**.

It was an exciting afternoon, but little did I know that finding the gem would bring attention of a **very dangerous** kind!

