



The little echidna
was having a
lovely time digging
for termites with
his mother and
his sister.

Suddenly he
cried out in
pain.



“What’s the matter?” said his mother.

“Oh Mummy, it’s awful,” he sniffled. “Something is hurting my back.”



His mother looked
carefully at the little
echidna's back.

“Oh dear, dear!”
she said. “There is
something caught
in your spines. It is
thin and shiny. Hold
still and I will try to
reach it.”





The mother echidna tried very hard to pull the shiny thing from the baby echidna's spines, but she could not grip it with her hard claws.



“Perhaps if you roll it
it might come out,” she
suggested.



The little
echidna rolled
and rolled, but
the strange
object would
not come loose.




“Maybe you could scratch it out.” said his mother.



The little echidna stretched his leg as far as it would go, and scratched and scratched. Still it would not come out.

“Oh, it hurts, Mummy!” he cried.

A photograph of two porcupine quills resting on a piece of weathered, greyish-brown driftwood. The quills are dark brown with prominent, lighter-colored (tan or yellowish) bands. They are positioned diagonally across the frame. The background is a dense layer of dry, brown pine needles and twigs, suggesting a forest floor. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture of the quills and the wood.

“Try having a swim — that may loosen it,” said his mother. “I will come with you to the creek.”