

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER • MIND OVER MATTER

By Carole L. Cooney

“Pull yourself together” is a modern idiom meaning regain control over your emotions and become calm after being very upset.

In 70 B.C., a poet named Virgil, used “mind over matter” in his famous poem, the *Aeneid*. To Virgil, “Mind” meant brain, thoughts and will power and “Matter” meant a physical body as well as trouble or difficulty. So “mind over matter” could mean will power over difficulty. Today, “mind over matter” means the power of the mind is stronger than the power of the body.

Setting: Grover Park

Characters:

Narrator

Susan, sister

Bill, older brother

Angela, baby sister

Mrs. Martin, mother

Mr. Martin, father

Narrator: The shady trees and glistening lake made Grover Park a perfect place to have a summer picnic. The Martin family had just arrived. While Mr. and Mrs. Martin unpacked the car, their children dashed off to the lake.

Susan: I bet I can run faster than you can!

Angela: (whining) No, you can't!

Bill: (laughing) Come on! I can beat both of you! LET'S GO!

Narrator: The children were leaping and splashing in the water, when suddenly, Mr. and Mrs. Martin heard a loud scream.

Angela: (falling into the water) Oh! (crying) Help! Mommy! Daddy!

Susan: (screaming) Mom! Dad! Come here! Quick!

Narrator: As Mr. and Mrs. Martin ran toward the lake, Bill was helping Angela stand up at the water's edge. Susan frantically ran up to her parents.

Susan: (crying) Mom, Angela almost drowned! She almost *drowned!*

Bill: Mom, Angela's okay. She just fell on a slippery rock. She's fine!

Susan: (hysterical) But Mom, she almost drowned! I know! I was there!

Mother: Susan, everything is all right. See. Bill was able to help Angela get up out of the water. Just pull yourself together, Susan. You're frightening Angela.

Narrator: Susan shivered with fear. She loved her baby sister and was alarmed when she saw Angela under the water. Mr. Martin took Angela up in his arms and walked the family toward the picnic table.

Father: How are you feeling Angela?

Angela: I'm okay, Daddy. I was real scared when I fell in the water. I didn't know what was happening.

Susan: I'm sure glad Bill was close by.

Bill: So was I. I did what I had to do, but it gets pretty dangerous out there when the rocks are slimy.

Father: That's what's called "mind over matter!" Yes, Bill, you did the wise thing even if it meant you were also in danger. Well done, son. I'm proud of you!

Mother: Susan, will you help Angela out of her swimsuit while your Dad and I get the barbeque ready.

Bill: Is there anything I can do?

Father: Well... Bill, I think you've done enough for one day. Sit down and relax. When the food is done, we'll all celebrate you as our hero!