

## Three Poems



### **Debbie Whitaker**

spends much of her time at beautiful and historic Cumberland University, where she works as coordinator of the Master of Arts in Education program and teaches as an adjunct instructor. She considers herself a beginning writer who is trying very hard to become disciplined and finish what she starts!

#### *School Days*

when I was ten, we had bomb drills  
marched single file,  
quickly and quietly,  
to the school's damp basement

turned our backs  
to the row of high windows  
and covered our heads to protect ourselves  
from shattering glass

should a Cuban missile  
find its way to our small town

we were standing on the  
Brink of War

we knew it from the nightly news,  
the serious tones of Huntley and Brinkley,  
in what might have been  
their last good-nights

and some 10-year-olds whispered  
excitedly,  
some laughed nervously, while some,  
with racing hearts,  
secretly longed for Mama.

#### *Cemetery Surprise*

Broken arrowhead,  
relic of an ancient day,  
found among the graves.

Aged artifact,  
carved of stone, ice cold  
and gray,  
buried in red clay.





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*Cumberland*

Memorial Hall,  
surrounded by a net  
of leafless trees,  
as ancient as these walls  
that stand so straight and tall.

Cobweb-enmeshed,  
or so it seems,  
as morning sunlight gleams  
on just-emerging buds  
foretelling spring.

March-wind embraced,  
the aged, crooked limbs  
begin to sway,  
like a thousand wrinkled arms  
fervently raised  
in spiritual ecstasy.

Cumberland ...  
your spired clock tower  
recalls a bygone day,  
a long-forgotten hour ...

But the trees,  
the trees remember.