

BLUE CREEK #3*Lenny Lasater*

Went down in that hole a child and came back up a woman
 Jim Walter's Blue Creek #3

Left my life in Tennessee and went to California
 Didn't take me long to come back home
 Ended up in Birmingham in school to be a teacher
 Wound up down in Blue Creek #3.

The men believed a woman in the mine would cause a cave-in
 They tried to scare us off or just be mean
 But we stood our ground and worked as hard as any other
 Digging coal in Blue Creek #3.

CHORUS

No, I didn't have a clue what taking on that job would do
 I lived a whole lifetime in a year
 I thought I was cool saying I was a coal miner
 Couldn't see the changes come on me
 Changes down in Blue Creek #3.

I learned I could make a living working with my body
 Didn't need to have a PhD
 Started my apprenticeship to learn to be a Sparky
 Learned a trade in Blue Creek #3.

I slipped off with a girl from Tuscaloosa in the darkness
 far away from the machinery
 I kissed LaWanda Hollihand, it changed my life forever
 I came out in Blue Creek #3.

CHORUS

I quit smoking cigarettes and took to drinking whiskey
 Trying to kill the pain inside of me
 A quarter mile down inside the earth I found the answer
 Answers down in Blue Creek #3.

Late one night on graveyard shift
 I was walking back to working
 Something awful up ahead I see
 I knew it was trouble by the way they flashed their lanterns
 Trouble down in Blue Creek #3.

The roof gave out, the rocks had slipped
 and made a great cathedral, where there was once a narrow hall
 We carried out those boys that night and I cleaned out my locker
 I'd done my time in Blue Creek #3.

CHORUS

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In 1976 Lenny Lasater dropped out of pharmacy school in Birmingham, Alabama, to work as a coal miner near Bessemer, Alabama, where she was one of thirteen women the company hired under a federal mandate. She describes that experience in her song "Blue Creek #3," written in 2011. Taking male-dominated jobs was a feminist statement, as it continues to be. Lenny sang this with the Atlanta-based Roxie Watson band at a concert in 2011, introducing the song as a tribute to Bluegrass legend Hazel Dickens, who had recently died. (See Georgianne Nienaber, "Atlanta's Roxie Watson Band Honors Bluegrass Legend Hazel Dickens," Huffington Post. May 10, 2011. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/georgianne-nienaber/hold-hold_b_858896.html). The 2011 performance is on Youtube and also on their CD Of Milestones and Moon Pie. See roxiewatson.com.