**Raised By Women** by Kelly Norman Ellis

*The poem, "Raised By Women" was published in a collection of poems titled Tougaloo Blues in 2003. In her poem, Kelly Norman Ellis brings to life a vivid picture of the kind of women she was surrounded and brought up by during her childhood in Mississippi. The poem's speaker takes you down south and makes you feel like a guest at the kitchen table by way of her descriptions.*

I was raised by  
Chitterling eating  
Vegetarian cooking  
Cornbread so good you want to lay  
down and die baking  
“Go on baby, get yo’self a plate”  
Kind of Women.

Some thick haired  
Angela Davis afro styling  
“Girl, lay back  
and let me scratch yo head”  
Sorta Women.

Some big legged  
High yellow, mocha brown  
Hip shaking  
Miniskirt wearing  
Hip huggers hugging  
Daring debutantes  
Groovin  
“I know I look good”  
Type of Women.

Some tea sipping  
White glove wearing  
Got married too soon  
Divorced  
in just the nick of time  
“Better say yes ma’am to me”  
Type of sisters.

Some fingerpopping  
Boogaloo dancing  
Say it loud  
I’m black and I’m proud  
James Brown listening  
“Go on girl shake that thing”  
Kind of Sisters.

Some face slapping  
Hands on hips  
“Don’t mess with me,  
Pack your bags and  
get the hell out of my house”  
Sorta women

Some PhD toten  
Poetry writing  
Portrait painting  
“I’ll see you in court”  
World traveling  
Stand back, I'm creating  
Type of queens

I was raised by women