**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