Raised on Roots & The Streets

By: Enavae Hughes

I was raised by a southerner cooking.

dirty down south food so good, you keep on looking

You in a food coma till the next day snoozing

“You want some more cause I know you still hungry”

I’m not refusing!

kind of women

I was raised by “If you don’t hit her imma

hit you” Going back and forth till you see

’em on the streets, instead of talking it out

They throw hands quick

No gloves - just guns

I was raised by

“Sit down and let me braid that Jackson 5 afro down”

“Little girl stay still or imma pop them legs”

Don’t clown (smell of Blue Magic in the air)

Kind of women

I was raised by If you say “Yes, okay,

or hey” you’re considered “lame”

But if you say “wsp, yo, and rd” your instantly in the game

Sunday Morning,

“Wake up, it’s the Lord’s Day!” No yawning

In the car playing Marvin Sapp “Never Would Have Made It”

Get ready for a 6 hour service

BWhere the choir be loud “I got joy in my soul”

And the preacher be earnest (If God didn’t lead you why are you here)

Asking for peppermints mid service

Peppermint breath and tambourine shaken *ch-ch*

Sunday dinner waiting. I crave it

Kind of women

I was raised by being a killer, trapper, bipper or jawns being dirty

Becoming a trend

Instead of going to school, we go bip.

Danger became a joke or even a habit

“I’m bout to go bip wit my youngbul Reek in the V”

Dada, my Twin, runnin these streets,

Always pushin me forward, never missin beats.

Called me Mamas, held me close,

Taught me love, respect that matters most.

Raised to know the roots and the beat in me

Raised by loud laughs that cut through the night,

by queens who shine cause their power’s their right.

Independent, bold no need to pretend,

Black women hold me up, that’s fam to the end.

Philly in my veins, I walk with respect,

their strength in my stride don't ever forget.

Dada was in the streets, but he saw more,

Always wanted me to be better, love at his core.

Held me tight. His heart my compass, my guiding light.

Music so loud the neighbors hear "boom, boom"

When that song drops you mop

That "Love and Happiness" by

Al Green type of music

I was raised to see my childhood

friends gone too soon.

But that was normal though

Hearing "FAHFAH." didn't scare us

It just told us " duck quick, disappear, go in the crib"

I was raised to listen before

I had to be in the real world's roar,

so I didn't have a balloon release next door.

Raised by blocks that talk back when you walk,

by corner store wisdom and late-night talks.

I learned to listen before I speak,

Cause in this city, silence ain't weak.

I move with heart, head high, no flex

From 5441 Belmar Ter, Southwest side,

Philly made me strong power I can't hide.

I was raised by Philly