



## Upgrade U

*Ni-Ni Simone*

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Life is poppin' and seventeen-year-old Seven McKnight is rockin' Stiles University's hottest baller, Josiah Whitaker, on her arm when it all falls apart. With groupies threatening her basketball wife status and Josiah's dreams of the NBA blowing up his ego, Seven finds herself in a tailspin. . .should she stay or leave? In steps the unbelievably fine sophomore heartthrob, Zaire St. James, who's been watching Seven and waiting for his chance. With Josiah doing his own thing, Seven finds herself falling for Zaire. But just when she decides to give Zaire her everything, Josiah becomes determined to win Seven back by any means necessary. . .

Praise for Ni-Ni Simone

"Ni-Ni Simone's fast-paced writing keeps me coming back for more." --L. Divine, author of the Drama High series

"Simone tells authentic stories of teen life in the 'hood better than any other author currently writing contemporary YA street lit. Spiced with plenty of Simone's trademark humor." --"Library Journal" on "Teenage Love Affair"

"Urban teen readers may recognize their friends and themselves in the language, music and feel of this fluffy-but-fun read." --"Kirkus Reviews" on "If I Was Your Girl"

## Upgrade U Details

Date : Published March 1st 2011 by Dafina Books (first published January 1st 2011)

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Author : Ni-Ni Simone

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## From Reader Review Upgrade U for online ebook

### Delonya says

Highly recommended YA book. Ni-Ni Simone provides powerful lessons for our young ladies in a voice that they can easily relate to!

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### Brauna says

Upgrade U was a book about a young girl named Seven that went to college with her bestfriend Shae and her boyfriend Josiah in New Orleans. The book was about teen drama, Seven had problems wit her boyfriend since high school. She found out he wascheating than left him after denying it for a little while. Alot of drama happened in this book she almost lost her bestfriend and she lost her boyfriend. But she didnt sit around and mope, she met someone new and moved on.

I really loved this book. I recommend this book t mainly girls or people who like teenage drama book. its really mainly a girl book but if boys are into drama books than i recommend them to real this book cause its a really good book. i rated this book 5 stars because its agood book it talks alot about stuff im into reading. its a really gook book and i recommend alot of people to read this book, cause as soon as you read it you get hooked and will love this book.

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### Tyler says

LOVED!!

Seven is a young woman that is now a freshman in college in Stiles U in New Orleans. Coming from the same high school as her boyfriend for three years that a sophomore and her best friend who is also a freshman. She assumed that college would be fun since she was attending one of the hottest school and she had her friends and boyfriend with her, but everything changed for Seven. Her and her boyfriend became even more distant, lies were told, and feelings were hurt. Seven had to find a way to move on and she did, but when she did her boyfriend started to realize what he had, she was stuck between the love of her life and her new crush.

I like this book because it was really funny. I had a lot of laughs reading it. It also teaches you how to make decisions for yourself.

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### Smiley Simon says

Great story for a teenager to read, this is the book that got me to start reading in the first place.

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### Emma says

Upgrade U is about the life of a former high school student, Seven McKnight, who gets a whiff of what college life is like. Seven enjoyed the idea at first, but had no idea about the emotional struggles she would soon go through. Ni-Ni Simone's purpose of writing this book was to entertain young adult audiences. It gives details on the fun aspects of college life, while incorporating drama which everyone loves to read about. Simone also touches base on struggles that teenage females face daily. It's no surprise why this and all her other books have so much popularity.

This book impacts its audience by giving them an insight on what girls go through in contemporary times. Simone provides powerful lessons for teenage readers through her characters. Even though the book is a love story, there are many life lessons that can be derived. Throughout the book, Seven went through many events that made her emotional, which many girls could relate to. Seven would say things like "Instantly, my heart sank. A tailspin of emotions crashed through my veins, causing me to feel a rush of panic, confusion, and uncertainty all at once. I didn't know whether to play it cool or to lose it," (Simone 61). Simone provokes the reader to put themselves in Seven's shoes in order to build a connection.

The book was well written and contained humorous undertones. I found it very captivating; although, I couldn't personally relate to any of the characters. I would often find myself at parts where I would go back and re-read the text because I was filled with so much laughter. Simone had a way of writing which appealed to the teenage generation, for example, "For a split second I thought about losing it and cussing him out for having turned into an arrogant creep, but something inside of me quickly said, Chill," (Simone 154). Most teenagers love to read books written in that manner because they can better understand and relate to it. The dramas presented in Ni-Ni Simone's books are something to always look forward to.

The greatest strength of this book was building a connection between the young audiences and the characters. Another great strength of the book was the imagery that Simone used to describe her characters and the events that took place. One of the sole weaknesses of the book was that it would not appeal to the mass audience of all ages. Sometimes Simone would go overboard with the context which caused confusion. For example a schoolteacher would not be pleased to read a book that is written like "...and ummm FYI...I'm not getting a degree in bare feet and babies" (Simone 155). Besides that the book was great, and I enjoyed every single bit of the scintillating humor.

I would recommend this book to a friend because it was emotional as well as interesting. The ending was fantastic. This was hands-down, the funniest book written by Ni-Ni Simone. I would recommend this book to anyone who loves romance and likes to dive into the book they're reading. Ni-Ni Simone also makes references to songs that a lot of people know or have heard of. The twist at the end added excitement to the book and I plan on reading more books by Ni-Ni Simone.

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## **African Americans on the Move Book Club says**

If your teen is looking for comedy, juicy love stories, and hard life lessons in a novel, look no further – Ni Ni Simone delivers! The interaction between characters, Shae, Khya, and Seven is riveting. These three ladies are college freshmen excited about what the environment of higher education has to offer. Khya is constantly going from one boy to next in hope of landing a well-paid, professional athlete husband. Shae is steadfast on strengthening her relationship with the campus radio DJ. Seven, the main character, battles with the infidelity of her high school sweetheart, the betrayal of her rebound beau, and the crumbling relationship with her best friend. The novel is chock full of laughs as Shae, Khya, and Seven try dodging their flamboyant neighbor, Courtney, and Seven's pimping step-cousin. This story was great; it was appropriate for its audience, yet captivating enough for any reader. There were a few time when it was difficult to tell who was talking, but

that didn't take away from the entertainment of country slang, late night parties, and broken and building love.

Natasha R. Hines  
AAMBC Reviewer

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### **Jasmine says**

"Upgrade U" was a sequel to a previous book i read called "shorty like mine". i must admit upgrade U was even better than the first book and i loved the first one. i highly recommened this book for anyone that loves drama, romance, and talking to theirselves as if their talking to the characters!

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### **Adrianna Foreman says**

Upgrade U By: Ni-Ni Simone  
Published: 2011  
Young Adult Fiction

This book is very interesting and many different people can relate to this book. The book "Upgrade U" is about a girl named Seven, who's on her way off to college with her best friend. As they get there, they met their their roommate Khya, then they headed out to the parties!!!! The parties begin and then Seven finds out who her boyfriend Josiah really is. While Seven and Josiah go through whatever they're going through, Seven begins to fall for Zaire. She now will have to choose between Josiah and Zaire. In my opinion, I think this book is very good. It has great imagery and describes all the characters very well. Being that this a young adult fiction book, it is very effective and beautiful because it's an emotional book. The point of view of the story was great and I agree with the point and I agree with the point of view that the author was giving to the audience because it shows that you have to give up something that isn't good for you to get something better.

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### **Akeirah Jordan says**

i love Ni-Ni Simone books, they relate to teenage lifes. i love the way she adds the song lyrics to the top of the page, based off of how the main character is feeling. great book !

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### **Amanda Yeargin says**

Seven goes to Stiles U. She just started and feels like she finally has freedom. When she goes to visit her boyfriend in his dorm she catches him talking to a girl. Sh ehas her suspions but tries to get over it. Meanwhile she met a guy who seems great but she is still tied to Josiah. Finally she realizes Josiah was cheating. So she goes off with he another guy, but its not a whole fairytale..

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## **Jolisa says**

So far i like this book. It caught my attention when i started to get in to it. Because it sort of related to me and my boy friend. Upgrade U is like a life check to make sure you in the right zone. For me, it was like a girl is struggling to keep her man with her, but he is doing her wrong. So a new, fresh guy comes into the picture and liek a taste of fresh air comes in and whips her away. Tryna stay one dude is complicated enough so jsut move on. This is almost similar to what i was going through so this is why i liked the book so much.

If i was in sevens Shoes i would have been move on, because her boyfriend is always putting her down. He always is telling her that she is just going to cheat on him, thats why she chose a collage so far away. I just wish that sometimes i could jump in the book and say she not cheating shes agood girl so shutUp and stop taliking to her like that. i really havent read much but what i have read is so good so far and i cant wait to get more into the book. And see if Seven goes back to the guy who was treating her wrong because she is in love with him or is she going to move on becaus she has school to worry about and stop worrying about these other guys.

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So reading more into this book i figured out that sevens boyfriend was cheating on her the whole time when he was acusing her for cheating on him.Seven doesn't want to be the girl that stays with her boyfriend even though he cheats. She knows he is but refuses to brake up with him. When Zaire comes into her life she starts to question weather or not she wants to stay with her boyfriend or Zaire. I feel that Seven shouldnt stay with her boyfriend because all he does is cheat on her and she doesnt deserve that because she trying to get her life together by finishing up school. I feel that Zaire would be good for her.Seven goes to Stiles U. She just started and feels like she finally has freedom. When she goes to visit her boyfriend in his dorm she catches him talking to a girl. She has her suspnsions but tries to get over it. Meanwhile she met a guy who seems great but she is still tied to Josiah. Finally she realizes Josiah was cheating. So she goes off with he another guy that i hope she will stay with.

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## **Martha Bangura says**

Simone's purpose in writing her book,Upgrade U,is to give her audience an insight on the fun aspects of college life. Upgrade U offer hope to it readers. It teaches us about the emotional struggles that females teenagers go through. Upgrade U is truly inspirational. It leaves a lasting impression in the mind of its readers.it's no surprise why this book and all of her other books have so much popularity.

Upgrade U is extremely well written. The story is very easy to read,but still offers an humorous vocabulary and variety of sentence structure. The author also provides insightful life lessons. For example,throughout the book,Seven say "instantly, my heart sank. A tailspin of emotions crashed through my veins, causing me to feel a rush of panic, confuseion, and uncertainty all at once. I didn't know whether to play it cool or to lose it" (Simone 61). Simone provokes the reader to put themselves in Seven's shoes in order to build a connection.

This book was very captivating. The love story told in this book is unlike any love story ever told in literature to date. I couldn't personally relate to any of the characters. I would often find myself at part where i would go back and re-read the text because i was filled with so much laughter. The first book of the series,Upgrade U, is full of drama, but it's also funny. This book possesses the necessary ingredients that we can always look forward to in life.

The greatest strength of the book, Upgrade U, is that it built a connection between young audiences and the

characters. Another great strength of the book was the imagery that Simone used to describe her characters and the events that took place. The greatest weakness of this book is that it wouldn't appeal to audience of all ages. Sometimes Simone would go beyond with the context which caused confusion. For example, a school teacher wouldn't be pleased to read an essay written by a student like this "...and ummm FYI...I'm not getting a degree in bare feet and babies" (Simone 155). It is honestly the best book that i have ever come across.

I would strongly recommend this book as well as the second series, A Girl Like Me, to teenagers. It is because it was emotional as well as interesting. The ending was fantastic. Simone also makes references to songs that a lot of people know or have heard of. This book has helped me look at life through an entirely new, positive, and hopeful lens, and i know it will have the same effect on other readers.

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### **Kim says**

some interesting characters, but they felt too predictable-- not complex. most of the book is the main character wavering between two men.

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### **Kanesha Lawson says**

This is the sequel following Shortie Like Mine. And, to summarize Josiah and Seven are high school sweethearts. But lately things between them haven't been so sweet since Josiah is a sophomore at Stiles University and she is an incoming freshman. He didn't even help her move in to her dorm and hasn't answered any of her calls. Her girlfriend Shae and new roommate Khya try to cheer her by taking her to a party Shae's boyfriend Big Country is the DJ. The party was turned up and booty shaking but Seven just couldn't enjoy herself because she missed Josiah. When she finally started enjoying herself it came crashing down when she was leaving the party and saw Josiah all in some girl face when she been calling him all day. Seven goes ham on him and leaves his begging self in the hallway. Minutes later he comes pounding and pleading her to open the door. Eventually she opens the door and he schemes his way back into her heart. After that nothing really changes between them. Later in the story she meets a guy named Zaire who seems way better than the way Josiah is treating her. And I guess you have to read the rest to find out if the love between high school sweethearts can last temptation.

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### **Niara says**

When I read this book Upgrade U by Ni-Ni Simone I realized that it was a good book. In the book there is a girl starting college and her high school boyfriend is already in college. Both of them are falling out and she meets somebody else that she really liked and then their relationship didn't last so long because he had lied to her about selling drugs. The reason I enjoyed this book is because it is realistic about someone's life and she is in college. Yes I would recommend this book to other people because I think they would enjoy it and it has a lot of different things that might happen to someone in college.

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