

# Clemson University grad writes about dating violence

**BY GREG OLIVER**  
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CLEMSON — Clemson University graduate Elizabeth Poston experienced an unhealthy dating relationship for years, leading her to write a book she hopes will help others avoid a similar experience.

Poston, writing under the moniker “Elle,” returned to Clemson last week and appeared at Friar’s Tavern to promote her fictionalized memoir “The Fall: An Autobiography of an Alter Ego.” The book explores dependencies, disorders and domestic abuse from the vantage point

of a young woman who adopts extreme coping mechanisms in order to endure a physically abusive relationship.

“I have spoken with many girls and women who have endured similarly abusive situations and, over time, realized that none of us saw ourselves as victims in the same way the world views abused partners,” Poston said. “That inspired me to write a fiction novel chronicling such a relationship from the inside in order to shed light on why someone would choose to endure such abuse.”

In 2008, Poston began writing the book prior to attending

business school. In January of this year, she attended a writer’s conference in San Diego and was so inspired by the writers and publishers she met that a publishing date of June 30 was set. That date just happens to be Poston’s birthday.

Poston said writing about dating abuse was less difficult than anticipated.

“It can always be tricky going to a dark emotional place and coming out of it with a healthy disposition,” she said. “‘The Fall’ has a purpose, though, and that purpose has driven me to the point of telling a realistic story about an insidious

problem so the story itself can become a tool of strength and empowerment.”

While Poston doesn’t consider herself a psychologist, she advises people who are not being strengthened by the relationships in their lives to shift perspective.

“Little moves can become big steps forward,” Poston said. “Try to find something you’re thankful for every day, look at yourself in a more positive light, observe how good it feels to do something nice. These help to recognize self-worth and to forgive yourself your mistakes, which, in my opinion, are the

best defenses against a potentially victimizing situation.”

Poston said the topic of dating abuse becomes more popular when magazines chronicle high profile stories of celebrities, such as Chris Brown and Rihanna, and the speculation that surrounds them.

“It interests people and they react strongly toward it, so there is definitely awareness concerning the problem,” Poston said.

For more information on “The Fall,” go to [www.elletheauthor.com](http://www.elletheauthor.com).