



Kimberley Society

Book Note

***Before It Breaks* by Dave Warner. Fremantle Press, Fremantle, 2015, 344 pages, ISBN 9781925161175. Paperback. RRP \$29.99. Also in Ebook.**

The lead character in this novel, Detective Daniel Clement, is, like many fictional crime fighters, plagued by a broken marriage and undesirable living arrangements. He also has too little time with his child for his liking. At times his preoccupation with his personal demons threatens to derail the story but, for the most part, it unfolds in an interesting and believable way. The writing is similar to that in the author's [City of Light](#), published in 1995.

Set partly in Broome, the story has connections with Derby, Perth and, to a greater extent, Hamburg. Some of the action is at a local fishing spot called Jasper Creek, and some on roads and beaches out of Broome. Descriptive passages make it is easy to visualise the surroundings. The introduction of bikers, drug dealers and users adds a seedy current day element which, coupled with the evolving Hamburg connection, keeps the reader guessing about the violence and murders at the heart of the book.

Warner's ability to weave small aspects of his characters' lives into a coherent story is enviable. So, too, is his ability to add layers of complexity to his plot without losing the reader in the process. Those things, combined with the simultaneous build up of the weather and the police investigation, certainly hold one's attention. The book has an ugly side but skilful handling of those parts keeps them from seeming gratuitous. It is too dark a book to recommend for enjoyment but it is definitely one that is well written.

[Sample chapters](#) are available on the Fremantle Press website.

Cathie Clement