

11 MINUTES

A Crime Novel of Melbourne's 1976 Great Bookie Robbery

MEDIA KIT

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Six men. Eleven minutes. The perfect crime — and the decade of violence that followed.

On 21 April 1976, a crew of masked gunmen robbed Melbourne's Victoria Club in broad daylight, escaping with what would now be worth \$80 million. No one was convicted. The money was never recovered. Within ten years, every man was dead.

11 Minutes is a gritty Australian noir novel that retells the heist and its aftermath through the eyes of those who lived it — thieves, wives, cops, and the younger brother who had to identify one of the bodies.

BOOK DETAILS

Title: 11 Minutes – A Crime Novel of Melbourne's 1976 Great Bookie Robbery

Series: The Eleven (Book 1)

Author: Gregory M. Carroll

Genre: Australian Noir / Crime Fiction / Historical Crime

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MEDIA ANGLES & STORY HOOKS

- 50th anniversary of the Great Bookie Robbery (April 2026)
- Author is the younger brother of one of the real men behind the story
- Melbourne's gangland history: Painters & Dockers waterfront wars, crooked cops, and union violence
- Australian noir revival — for readers of George V. Higgins, Andrew Nette, Peter Temple
- Women in the underworld — the wives and families left to navigate the fallout

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gregory M. Carroll is not just the author of *11 Minutes*— he lived it. Born and raised in the same tough Melbourne world as his characters, he is the younger brother of Ian "Fingers" Carroll, one of the real men linked to the heist. Ian was Greg's brother, his best man, and the man whose body he had to identify.

Now retired and based on the Gold Coast, Carroll writes Australian noir grounded in lived experience, exploring loyalty, greed, and the quiet decay that follows a life of crime. *11 Minutes* is the first novel in his planned series *The Eleven*, tracing the rise and fall of Melbourne's underworld from the 1950s to the 1990s.

STORY & STRUCTURE

The novel opens with the robbery itself — six masked men storming the Victoria Club and clearing out the bookies in just eleven minutes. From there, the story cuts back to the docks of 1950s and 60s Melbourne, where Ray "Chuck" Bennett and Ian "Fingers" Carroll come of age in the Painters & Dockers union and the Waterfront Wars that leave more than forty dead.

Conceived in Pentridge Prison and refined in the UK, the heist is military in its precision. For a brief moment, the crew live the Life of Riley — until enemies close in. Not just the police Task Force, but the Kane brothers (Australia's Krays), Sydney Toecutters, and rival crews who all want a piece.

As paranoia mounts and bodies fall, the novel tracks the slow unravelling of loyalty and power. Told through shifting points of view — the crew, their wives, and the younger brother observing it all — *11 Minutes* becomes less about the robbery itself and more about what comes after: the cost of ambition and the illusion of control.

STORY & STRUCTURE

- **Prologue** – Melbourne 1970s
- **Part I – The Crime of the Century (21 April 1976)**
 - The Arrival • The Heist • The Crime Scene • The Getaway
- **Part II – Where It Began (1958–1974)**
 - Raymond “Chuck” Bennett • Ian “Fingers” Carroll • On the Waterfront • Painter & Docker Wives • The Dirty Blue Line • Waterfront Wars
- **Part III – The Making of a Legend (1972–1976)**
 - At Her Majesty’s Pleasure • The Crew • Team Building • Putting the Job Together
- **Part IV – The Aftermath (1976–1977)**
 - The Life of Riley • Vultures Circling • First Cracks • Crossroads
- **Part V – Retribution (1976–1983)**
 - The Les Kane Murder • The Death of Ray Bennett • The Murder of Brian Kane • The Death of Ian Carroll
- **Epilogue & Factual Notes**

EARLY PRAISE

“A quietly devastating tale of crime, loyalty, and consequence – 11 Minutes captures the uneasy truths of Melbourne’s underworld.”

— Mark Q., ex-Melbourne bookie

“A great read for those who appreciate a crime novel with depth, historical resonance, and a distinctly Australian voice.”

— Michelle B., ex Kings Cross bar worker

“Your writing is perfect for this 'vintage crime' genre – it’s a fun ride, so easy to get into the characters that I found myself rooting for them.”

— Katrina M., school registrar

