

Eating Crow

This came from a man who runs a 2,000-acre corn farm up around Barron, WI, not far from Oshkosh. He used to fly F-4Es and F-16s for the Guard and participated in the first Gulf War.

His story:

I went out to plant corn for a bit, to finish a field before tomorrow morning and witnessed The Great Battle. A golden eagle -- big, with about a six-foot wingspan - flew right in front of the tractor. It was being chased by three crows that were continually dive bombing it and pecking at it. The crows do this because the eagles rob their nests when they find them.



At any rate, the eagle banked hard right in one evasive maneuver, then landed in the field about 100 feet from the tractor. This eagle stood about 3 feet tall. The crows all landed too and took up positions around the eagle at 120 degrees apart, but kept their distance at about 20 feet from the big bird. The eagle would take a couple steps towards one of the crows and they'd hop backwards and forward to keep their distance. Then the reinforcement showed up.



I happened to spot the eagle's mate hurtling down out of the sky at what appeared to be approximately Mach 1.5. Just before impact, the eagle on the ground took flight, (obviously a coordinated tactic; probably pre-briefed) and the three crows that were watching the grounded eagle also took flight -- thinking they were going to get in some more pecking on the big bird.

The first crow being targeted by the diving eagle never stood a snowball's chance in hell. There was a mid-air explosion of black feathers, and that crow was done.

The diving eagle then banked hard left in what had to be a 9G climbing turn, using the energy it had accumulated in the dive, and hit crow #2 less than two seconds later.



Another crow dead.



The grounded eagle, which was now airborne and had an altitude advantage on the remaining crow that was streaking eastward in full burner, made a short dive, then banked hard right when the escaping crow tried to evade the hit. It didn't work - crow #3 bit the dust at about 20 feet AGL.

This aerial battle was better than any air show I've been to, including the War Birds show at Oshkosh. The two eagles ripped the crows apart, and ate them on the ground; and, as I got closer and closer working my way across the field, I passed within 20 feet of one of them as they ate their catch. It stopped and looked at me as I went by, and you could see in the look of that bird that it knew who's Boss of the Sky. What a beautiful bird!



I loved it. Not only did they kill their enemy, they ate them. One of the best Fighter Pilot stories I've seen in a long time.

~Unknown Author