

Windy walk with hooded crows

by [Jeff Gundy](#) in the [July 20, 2016](#) issue

This northern life must be two, no three, of those black-headed, gray-bodied birds. They *look* like crows, they stalk the forests stubborn as partisans who know they will die for a lost cause, who list the code names of their fallen comrades, who sit in miserable bunkers and write *What if nobody wanted to sacrifice?* and *Spring is coming but not to Lithuania*. So wrote Lionginas Baliukevičius, aka Dzūkas, in 1949. *I sit and think*, he wrote, *but my thoughts don't materialize into anything*. The birds are crows, hooded crows, similar to the carrion crow but elevated to full species status in 2002. The partisan Dzūkas died in 1949, his country not free, his last hideout collapsed. I skipped to the end of his brave, sad journal, a few sentences in praise of Tolstoy, who went pacifist and ate no meat in his last years, who wrote *All, everything that I understand, I understand only because I love* and *The two most powerful warriors are patience and time*. The crows live in the forest, walk its enigmatic floor, test everything they find. Love nothing. Stay away from the bunkers.