

One Day I Will Lose My Duolingo Streak

I'm waiting for the green owl to teach me
how to say what I'm afraid to put into words.

I don't need this but am full of wanting. Is it too much
to attempt five languages at once? Can I take them all?

On good days, Duo treats me like a considerate lover,
asks if I am prepared for more.

I almost always am. I try
to be the best student, top

the leaderboard week after week.
I know this says something about my desires,

but that is not why I'm here. I want to be successful
at something that takes me outside of myself. I want

to know all the ways to say "good morning" to you. This
is something else we can count as good communication.

You are a specialist, with only one language to master.
I'm reminded you're already bilingual.

I'm attracted to
what I lack. After sex

one morning—a rare occasion—you turn away from me,
pick up your phone. A notification. You have fallen behind.

I hate that this is who we have become, letting an app
interrupt without thought. But, sure, don't lose

your streak. It doesn't matter that I wasn't finished
with you. I'm barely holding on.