

## Caelestis Ars Poetica

**Ryan Prusak**

An angel crosses the golden pillars of heaven,  
cooling himself inside the clouds  
before entering the throne room of God  
to sit in a creaky chair  
and ask: Was I ever born?

The throne is empty.

The room is too vast, bright, golden.

There's not a crack in the pillars  
or a line carved out of place.

Stanzas line the walls,

each perfectly, unquestionably infallible.

God sits across from the angel,  
in a creaky chair, too, but Hers  
looks better with Her in it.

She's stooped so sharply that  
She can hardly be noticed,

in all Her wondrous glory,

holding an ivory mirror  
so that She can watch Herself  
write poetry.

Seems a bit awkward,  
holding a mirror and writing,  
but the angel knows better than to say such a thing.

The angel is told to speak purely.

The question becomes the angel's next poem, and the angel adds that  
he can read a birth certificate that proves his beginning,  
and he can imagine himself sheltered  
from the outside.

God reads it,

without looking away from the mirror,  
and pokes a little hole in the angel's heart:

She says that  
something is missing.

Are these words too direct,  
forming a whole that lacks  
Expression?

Where is the Soul?

I hesitate to define myself,  
for fear of what my words are  
missing.  
That a god like You

will look from the outside, and see  
a birth certificate.

**Ryan Prusak** is currently an MA student and graduate teaching assistant in English at UND. He studied marketing as an undergraduate, also at UND, earning his BA in spring 2025 with a minor in criminal justice and a certificate in creative writing. Needless to say, his interests are eclectic! Speculative novels have a special place in his heart, but he is interested in exploring other forms of writing—from poetry, to CNF, to professional communications—in general. Ryan has written a young-adult fantasy manuscript, titled *Regicide: Eye of the Seraphim*, and he has multiple other creative projects currently in the works.