One author* pointed out that if the Ancient Greeks, pioneers of grammatical inquiry, pictured the proverbial patron saint of grammar this way, it is no wonder that students of all ages, cultures, and genders are often less than enthusiastic when forced to worship at her feet—or at least her foot, perched on the “ladder of learning.”

Notice the array of tool-like brooches hanging from the bodice of her dress—sharp, pointed instruments with which to root out errors. Ever the arbitress of decorous discourse, affirmatio and negatio weighing heavily on her shoulders, framing her pursed-lipped, rather pinched expression while the pinchers themselves—ready to pluck a dangling participle from its precarious position—perch innocently on the ladder to her left. Like the right-handed stranglehold with which she grasps the squawking bird, Gramatica stands guard, choking the life out of many an essay, prescriptively probing even the most benign infelicities.

THE GOOD NEWS: OUR CLASS WILL NOT BE FASHIONED THIS WAY