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that our circumstances were wholly different. And he sent a letter to the officials of the city, but did not address it to them, but to me. They came and gave it to me. The letter ordered me "to champion the peace." Therefore I was in great difficulty. For it was possible neither to appeal the case, since there was no legal adversary, but it was the Governor himself who proposed the name and confirmed it, nor to find with what one might contend, or against whom, and how one might arrange the matter. But this alone seemed best to us and the officials when we took counsel together, to make an appeal, as it were, against the officials who gave me the letter. Evening came, and I asked the God what this meant, and what should be done. And I received the verse from Delphi:

"These things will be a care to me and the white maidens."
How was this fulfilled? Not many days later, letters came to me from Italy, from the Emperors, the Emperor himself and his son, which praised me in other ways and confirmed to me immunity because of my rhetorical career, provided that I practice it. I also received, together with the Imperial letters, letters from Heliodorus, who had been Prefect of Egypt, one for me myself and another on my behalf to the Governor. They were very ennobling and honorable, and had been written much before this need, but arrived then opportunely. Therefore I immediately referred "the white maidens" to the letters. Though encouraged by the oracle and by this chance occurrence, I was unable to move since the God restrained me, but I sent a letter to the Governor, and made clear the nature of this whole affair of mine, and that those who told him my name seemed in every way to say nothing more than the name. I made clear who they were who exempted me, and the letters which had newly arrived. And at the same time, together with my own letter, I also sent these, both the ones of recommendation and exemption.

While the matter was still pending, all sorts of orders kept coming from the notaries, as many as seemed to be friendly toward me, and at the same time to see correctly the necessities. For they pointed out the great power of the man, and that he was one of the Imperial judges, and especially his tenacity and strength of purpose, and that for no reason would he change whatever he had once approved. And they begged me not to offend him in vain. I also intentionally wrote to them rather long and audacious letters, since I knew well that these

would fall into Severus' hands, for I heard that they were rather close to him. But the principal argument, which I also wrote to him, was that they requested impossible things. 215

February After this, Severus went down from the Upper 78
153 A.D. Districts to Ephesus, to hold the assizes. After he read my letters, he commanded me to appear there.

But I sent others. When the appointed day arrived, and my name was called, the public prosecutors approached. And before they even spoke, Severus said: "I have long known of Aristides, and I marvel at his reputation, and I agree that he holds the first place in rhetoric, and these things have also been written to me by my friends in Rome. I ask him," he said, "to share in my administration. But I also confirm to him the rights of immunity, and they remain in force." He said these things publicly. He inscribed them in the minutes. When the verdict turned out thus, those whom I had sent for the suit believed that they had accomplished something, since the public prosecutors offered congratulations for the honor and the others made much of the fact that Severus said that he did these things in the measure of a request and that he confirmed the immunity for all future time for me, even when I was absent. And they believed that they returned not completely without results, as it seems, and on the other hand, they did not know how it was proper to make the appeal, when a man was not imposing the office by right of judicial authority, but, as it were, asking a favor and beginning a sort of friendship. But having acquiesced in the present circumstances, they returned to me and recounted the whole affair.

In this, the day fixed for the appeal also passed. Therefore we were still worse off than before, for I was not satisfied to have received empty honors. Again I solicited the God, and asked and inquired how one should handle this matter. And he gave to me a very wonderful dream, the particulars of which I would not be able to tell, but the sum of it, as it were, was as follows. *I dreamed that I spoke to the clerk of the Governor about these things. He had come to me. When he heard everything, he promised that he would undo and change the verdict, and he ordered me to pay about five hundred drachmas.* When I had had the dream, in one way I became happier because there appeared to be some kind of promise in it, and there

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