

'Let your only tears be tears of joy,' he writes

TRIALIST'S WEDDING

PLEA

By BOBBY HARRYPERSADH

A PRETTY 18-year-old Durban girl is due to become a bride on July 16 — but her favourite brother will not be there for the greatest occasion of her life.

He is in a Pretoria prison cell — and just 24 hours after her wedding he will face a judge at the old synagogue in Pretoria, charged under the Terrorism Act.

But the man, Yousuf Hassan Essack, has written a poignant letter to his sister Gori, who is to marry Yunus, son of Mr and Mrs A K A Motalla, in Durban.

Yousuf is the second son of Mr and Mrs Hassan Essack of Queen Street, Durban.

Yousuf was detained in Durban on January 7, this year. He was released on January 12 but detained again on February 5, and was removed to Johannesburg.

Yousuf and three others Mahomed Salim Essop, 22, a third year medical student at Wits University, Indhrasan Moodley, 27, a pharmacy lecturer at the Indian University of Durban-Westville and Mrs Amina Desal, 51 of Roodepoort, a business-woman are facing a main charge

under the Terrorism Act and three alternative charges under the Suppression of Communism Act.

But from the grim cells came a moving letter.

It says:

Dear Gori,

At this important stage of your life I find myself groping for words to express the happiness I feel for you.

"My only regret is that I shall not be at your wedding, but this should not influence your joy and happiness — I know that this will be a particularly trying time for you.

"I know that in the midst of your joy, your thoughts will turn to your brother and your heart will be saddened, but when your heart turns to sorrow, I want you to know and understand that joy and happiness are also born out of sorrow.

BE BRAVE

"So it is that at this moment I can only feel happiness. I want you to be brave and think only of the future and the life that you will share with Yunus.

"Marriage is an institution uniting the will of the two to create a will greater than the will of the two who created it. In reality, it is not always like we have envisioned in our dreams, or seen in the films.

"It will have its trials and tribulations, its ups and downs and its shortcomings.

But you must realise that after every fall you should rise to a level greater than the level before the fall.

"This level, that I talk about is love, understanding and harmony. Your marriage should not only bring you material satisfaction but also spiritual fulfilment. For marriage is a pure and holy liaison.

I want you to assure papa and ma that I will be most happy if your wedding will be conducted in the same manner as if I were present. I shall be disappointed if, because of me, the ceremony is not carried out in the tradition of happiness befitting such an occasion. The only tears I want you and everybody else to shed are tears of joy.

"Tell Yunus too, that my only sorrow will be that of losing a sister but that they will be forshadowed by the knowledge that in the end I will have gained a brother.