FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT

YOU ARE AN IDIOT



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“Come on, where are they?”

“I’ll show you later.”

“Oh god you are the most annoying brother ever!”

I heard him throw what must have been my shoes against the door.
He was rummaging throughout his room for his ID card and his passport.
He wouldn’t find them. I know. I’m the one who hid them.

His muffled voice came through the door: “What is your problem, man?
I didn’t even know it was election day today.”

“Exactly.”

“What do you mean, exactly?” he asked.

“The very fact you didn’t even know you were supposed to vote until I told you just goes to show you don’t deserve to get a vote at all.”

There was silence. And then a bellow:

“YOU. ARE. SUCH. AN. IDIOT!!!”

I walked off into the kitchen to make myself a coffee. It was all so ridiculously unfair. I’ve been on my student council for the past three years. I've been to all the demonstrations. I’m being conscripted into a combat unit in three months’ time. And yet I don’t get to vote on the government that might send me to my death because I’m too young by a month. While that idiot in there gets to vote because he was born 18 months before me? How does that make sense?

It’s not even like he has any opinions worth having, anyway. He doesn’t work, he doesn’t study, he doesn’t serve, he doesn’t care about anything. I haven’t seen him keen to volunteer in National Service since he got out of army duty for his “mental health challenges. ”And until he gets “medical”

permission to take cannabis as a treatment, he's doing fine self-prescribing. He's a bum. My big brother Alon is a bum. And I love him. He's a fun guy. But there's no way I'm letting him out to vote.

Each time I ask him who he's going to vote for he just answers to annoy me. One day he'll tell me he plans to vote for Ben Gvir so that I'll get permission to "kick Arab butt," and the next day he'll tell me he was joking and he really wants to vote for the United Arab List "because Israel's a dumb country, after all." Something tells me that the moment he finds out there's a party called the Pirates he'll go ahead and vote for them because he'll be able to make stupid sounds from the voting booth.

The truth is that he just doesn't care. And I do. Last week he offered just to go vote for whomever I wanted. But that just annoyed me more than anything else he'd said. Especially as he was bound to change his mind the next day. He doesn't deserve to vote.

I heard a muffled shout from his now-upside-down room. I went back to hear.

"So why don't you go to Bnei Brak and stop them voting, huh?"

"Why Bnei Brak?"

"The Haredim don't do anything useful either. They don't serve in the army, they don't earn money, they have absolutely no dress sense – shouldn't you be out there stopping them from voting, too?"

And before I could say anything in response, he added triumphantly, "And while you're at it, how about you set up a blockade in Kfar Kassem, too? All those Arabs who don't serve in the army shouldn't get a vote either, should they?"

I was silent. I began to answer carefully, but Alon cut me off with a shriek of laughter, "YOU ARE AN IDIOT!!"

Questions

- Should he give Alon his ID so he can go out to vote?
- Should there be a requirement for a minimum level of involvement in Israeli society to allow you to vote? What should that be?
- Who should have the right to vote in the Israeli elections?