

# Day-Z meets Jurassic Park meets Minecraft

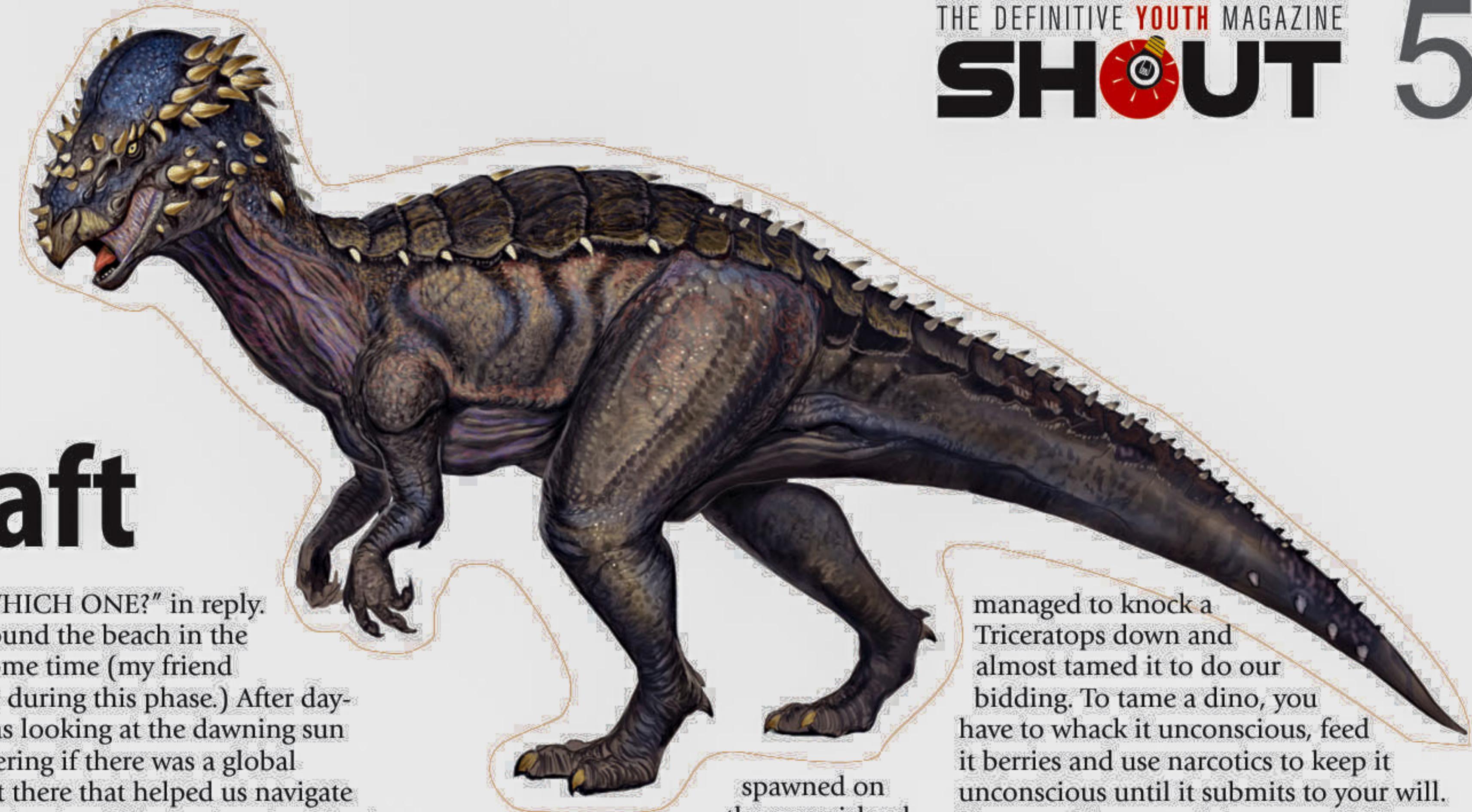
RUMMAN R KALAM

Bleary-eyed, I looked at the time on my phone. It was 12:30PM. I'd sat down to play ARK: Survival Evolved at 3AM. I still didn't see nor get eaten by a Tyrannosaurus Rex yet, thankfully.

Being an open-world junkie, I got the game during the 20% off sale for \$23.99 (Tk. 2100 at BDBOX on Facebook) on Steam. My friend got another copy as well and after playing singleplayer for some time, I decided to host a server. It was the beginning of extreme sleep-deprivation borne from my hellbent desire to build a bridge across a river that led us towards a Brontosaurus.

I was dropped straight onto the beach and my friend was dropped on the other side when we joined. We literally had no way of knowing where we were in the game. I turned on the microphone and half-screamed "NEAR THE BIG BRONTOSAURUS ON THE BEACH," only

to hear "WHICH ONE?" in reply. We ran around the beach in the dark for some time (my friend died thrice during this phase.) After daybreak, I was looking at the dawning sun and wondering if there was a global marker out there that helped us navigate towards each other. This is when I realized that I would probably die after a few hours in the wilderness. I turned on the mic again and yelled "I'M ON THE EASTERN END OF THE BEACH, NEAR THE GREEN SPACESHIP." It was not a spaceship, it was possibly a supply drop. Ones that fall out of the sky and light up for some reason. 15 hours into the game, I still haven't gotten anywhere near the big-ass spaceship-like things that vaguely resemble Reapers from Mass Effect. I digress. Back at the beach, my friend managed to find me, at that moment I pressed M and found that there's a roughly drawn map on my character. I was on one of the many, many islands in the map. Luckily, we both



spawned on the same island.

Then we got chased by a couple of Dilophosaurus and got killed. After repeating the aforementioned scenario a few times, we managed to make a hatchet and a pickaxe. A roughly-built campfire later, we found several dodos that we killed to gain XP to make a thatch house. This game didn't hold our hand and tell us what to do. That is where the immersion comes in. There is no tutorial. That might put off a lot of people, quite rightly so but the game is designed in such a way that everything comes intuitively unless you're geographically-challenged like I am.

Some 20 levels and 8 hours later, we

managed to knock a Triceratops down and almost tamed it to do our bidding. To tame a dino, you have to whack it unconscious, feed it berries and use narcotics to keep it unconscious until it submits to your will. It's something out of the page of Bill Cosby's dating manual. Creepiness aside, the game's mechanics are quite well fleshed out.

Many would say that Early Access games are ruining the industry but ARK is the sort of game that does Early Access right in a way that actually helps the industry. I daresay that it's done better than some full version AAA games that we had in recent months. If you'd like to have a real taste of the game, I suggest Cr1tikal's (penguinz0 on YouTube) gameplay video. Keep in mind that the game is not as buggy as he makes it out to be. The devs roll out updates almost twice a week. There are no game-breaking bugs as of yet.

## GAMES WITH GREAT GRAPHICS ON LOW SPECS

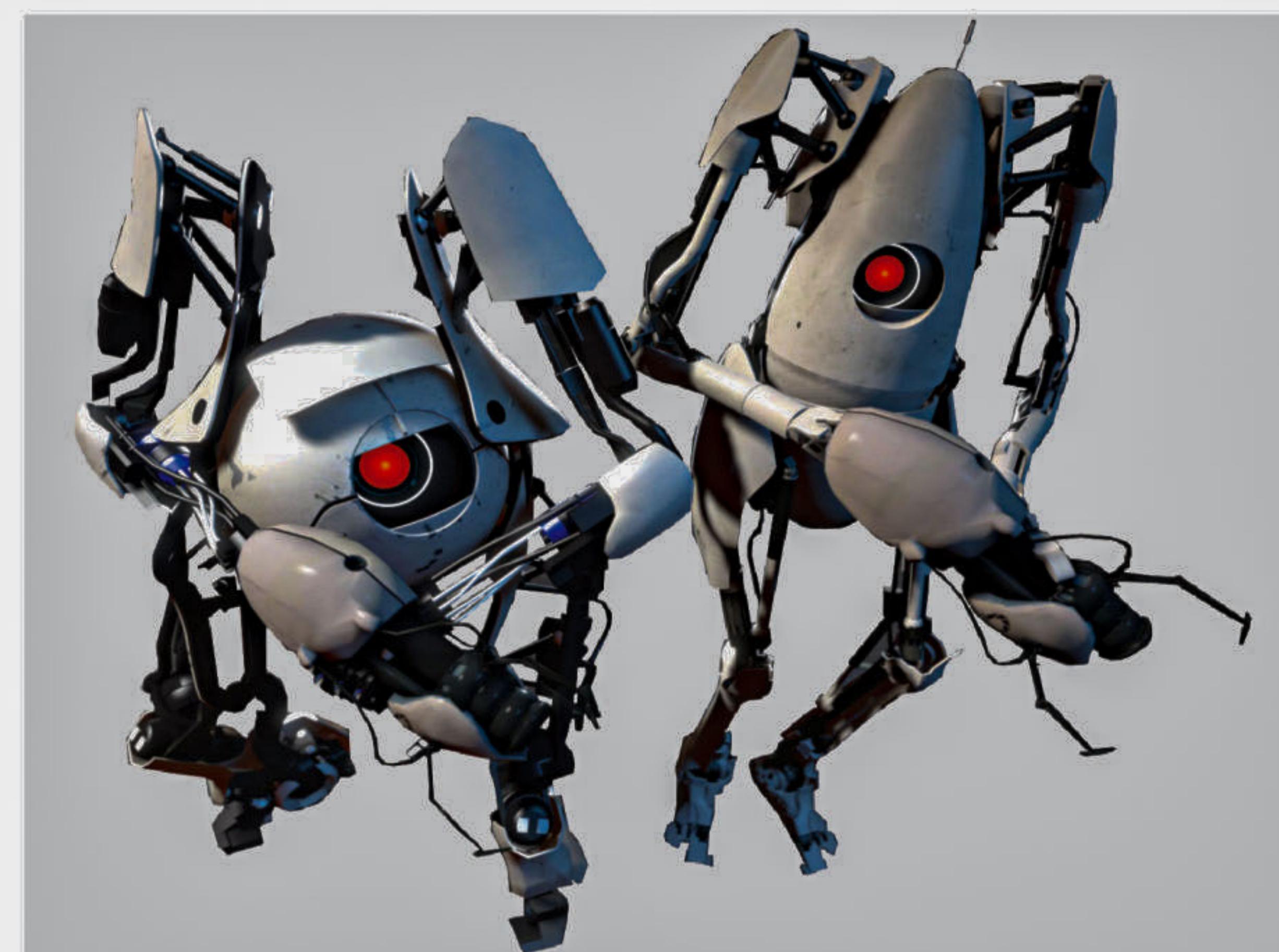
NOVO MANZOOR

There are many reasons why you might end up with a weak PC. It might be a hand-me-down laptop from an older person, it might be the trusty family computer you don't want to get rid of, or something else. But what if you want to play games with good graphics? Unless your computer is an absolute toaster, you will be able to play these great games with minimum problems:

**1. Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare:** The game that started the rise of the Call of Duty franchise towards billion dollar status. It is still one of the best military shooters one can play. The multiplayer experience is of course, stellar. But somehow, the game also managed to have a deeply memorable single player campaign. COD4 portrays grimy, dangerous war zones beautifully, complementing the action.

**2. Sega Rally Revo:** A solid rally racer and a worthy successor to the classic Sega Rally arcade game. Nothing can compare with the experience of pushing the limits of the monstrous Lancia Stratos through brilliant, exotic locations.

**3. Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas:** One of the best entries in the insanely popular GTA franchise. Framed by the story of protagonist Carl Johnson's efforts to save the gang he considers his family;



the game lets you drive cars, ride bikes, fly planes, play pool, date girls, eat food, work out, dance, modify cars, shoot guns, blow stuff up... let's just say you can do a whole lot of things. Old PC or not, give this game a try if you haven't already.

**4. Portal 2:** The Portal series can boast of having one of the most unique gameplay experiences around. Portal 2

combines the mind-bending gameplay of the first game with more polish, new game mechanics, and a whole lot of fun. A game that works the brain alongside the fingers, all the while being pleasing to the eye.

**5. Battlefield 2:** Among military FPS games, the Battlefield series is known for its special brand of gameplay. Along with various soldier classes, you also have

access to tanks, boats, buggies, and even fighter jets. Battlefield 2 provides great thrills, along with graphics that still hold up quite nicely. Want to be a hero and capture a base alone? Or will you prefer raining death on enemies from above using an attack chopper? The choice is yours.

**6. Devil May Cry 4:** DMC4 was created in the amazing MT Framework game engine, and is considered one of the best optimized games in history. In this game, the inimitably cool Dante teams up with newcomer Nero to take out hordes of Demons, in style. Despite the glorious graphics depicting the hack-and-slash action taking place, this game runs on pretty much anything.

**7. Counter Strike: Source:** CS:S is easily one of the very best and most played team-based FPS games. Though the graphics are much better compared to the original Counter Strike, this game will still not strain your computer. For the best experience, gather some friends on LAN and lose countless hours to Terrorists VS Counter-Terrorists action.

If your PC has at least 512MB RAM and a processor that is less than 10 years old, you should be able to enjoy all these classic titles comfortably. Happy gaming!

*Novo Manzoor is an athlete. He surfs the web all day. You can reach him at:*

*novomanzoor@yahoo.com*