

Creative Photography

**Or How do I get from
here to there with my
Photographs
by [Glenn Abelson](#)**

WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

It could be a shot directly from the camera.

It could be created in post processing.

WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

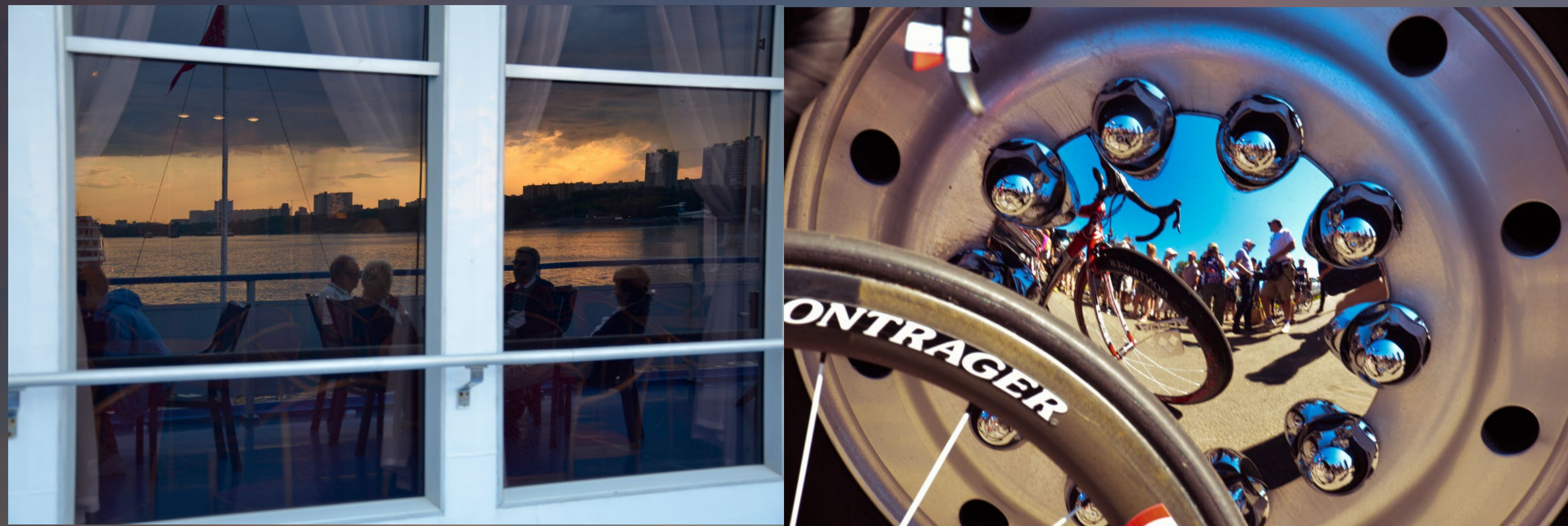
Some options for creative work straight from the camera would include:

- Long Exposure
- Multiple Exposure
- Extreme Perspectives
- Naturally Unusual Shots
- Motion of object OR camera
- Reflections
- Size anomalies



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

Reflections



Left: Reflection of sunset and people on deck
Right: At the Colorado Pro Bicycle Race

WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

Motion – in the original photo, or added post processing.



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

- The remainder of this presentation is about post processing work. Some example types include:
Two Color



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Surreal
- Absurd



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Natural (looks like an untouched shot)



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Funny or Silly or maybe political. I call this Rushmore University



WHAT IS CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

- **Painterly or Sketch** (the bridge and water are natural, the surroundings are not)



PREPARATION

1. You do not need an idea as you take photos, though one may occur.
2. Your ideas do not need to be spectacular. Creative photography is in the eye of the photographer.
3. Query your browser for 'creative photographs' then select images for ideas
4. Collect pictures of items that may be useful:

BASIC COLLECTIONS PART 1

Doors, Stairs & Fences
Windows
Portholes
Gates
Entrances &
Exits of all
kinds



BASIC COLLECTIONS PART 2

Items with natural
Perspective, like sky shots,
Boardwalks and roadways



BASIC COLLECTIONS PART 2

Skylines and Landscapes



PREPARATION

When you are looking at your photos, step back for a moment and ask yourself:

- 1. What could I remove or add to change the dynamic of this photo (people, a bottle of wine)?**
 - 2. What could I change, within the photo itself (the sky or the shape of a building)?**
 - 3. What impact would a gradient filter have on all or part of the photo?**
 - 4. What if I tilt all or part of the photo?**
 - 5. What if I put a different background on all or part of the photo?**
- Let's start with a few simple ideas:**

THINK A LITTLE BIT OUTSIDE THE BOX



MAKING YOUR PHOTOS ACTUALLY DIFFERENT



I took some tulips from a photo at the botanic garden, some faces from people at the botanic garden, created multiple layers and played with textures, brushes, blur, copy and paste.

PURE PS – TEXTURES, BRUSHES, BLUR, COPY AND PASTE



Cut out some tulips and repeated them around the faces.
Added some random brush strokes.
Dropped a texture on top of it all and reduced opacity to suit.

FOR THE TRULY SIMPLE, LOOK ONLINE FOR PS ACTIONS



This was done with an action called abstract 2. You brush the part of the photo you want to keep and apply the action. You will get dozens of layers so you can customize. The Action does all the work.

FALL LEAVES LYING ON THE GROUND

Simple
thought.
What to do
with a bunch
of fall
leaves?

Answer: Put
something
that does
not belong in
an 'empty'
spot.



EYE SEE YOU THROUGH THE LEAVES

I added saturation and copied my wife's eye and face from another photo and "pasted into" this photo.

Paste Into gives you the flexibility to move the pasted photo to fit.

Other ideas:
Coffee cup
Mirror,
Lightning



Tools used:
Photoshop
Saturation
and paste
into.

ANOTHER USE FOR THE TULIPS AT THE BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN



Flowers and animals are part of a photographers portfolio, and excellent tools for post processing creativity.

PERSPECTIVE SHOT OF BUILDINGS, NYC

For perspective, shoot up, down or into the distance on a road or walkway.

The reflections of the other office buildings was a bonus



I enhanced this photo with more 'sunset' and put the tulips in front.

TULIPS AT SUNSET

Tools used:
Topaz Adjust,
Golden Hour

Photoshop cut
and paste

Photoshop
saturation



This could have been a shot from the camera given the right conditions.

COLORADO PRO CYCLING TOUR



Bicycle rider going to start of the race.

COLORADO PRO CYCLING TOUR



I applied to motion blur to the bicycle rider only.
I applied the brush strokes and painterly effect to the background only.

SOMETIMES YOU WORK AND WORK ON A PHOTO AND NEVER GET WHAT YOU WANT. THIS PHOTO COULD BE A NEW TEXTURE, HOWEVER.

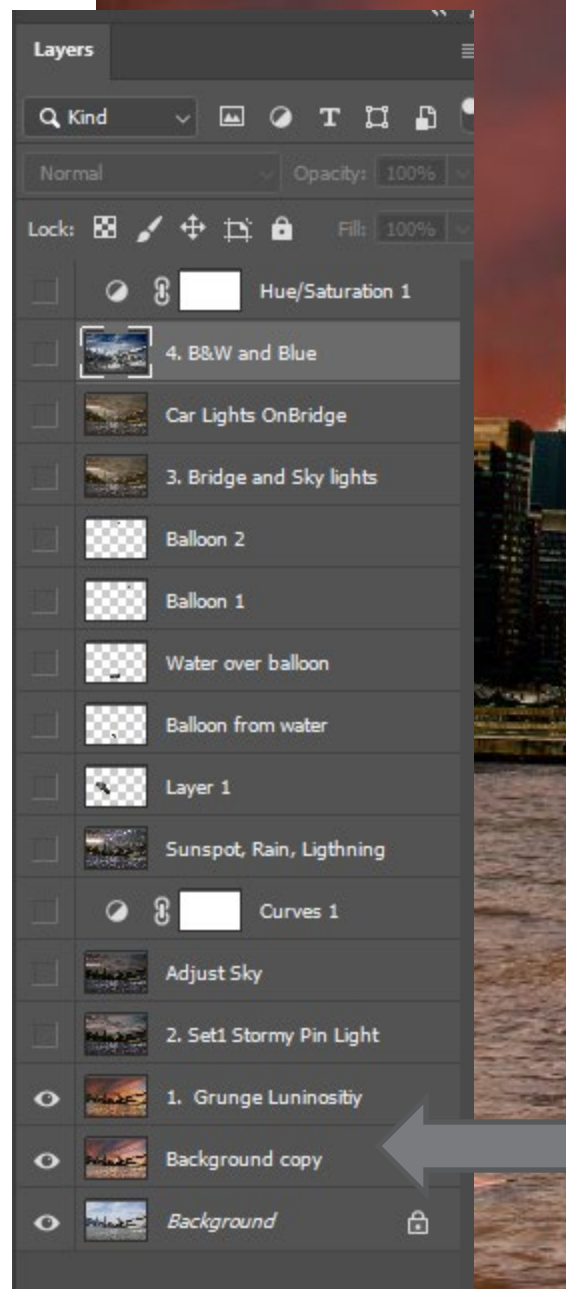


LET'S LOOK AT A FEW MORE COMPLEX EXAMPLES

NYC SKYLINE & BROOKLYN BRIDGE FROM BROOKLYN



I wanted to do something, but had no idea where I would wind up.
Important: The creative work is **ANYTHING** you do to change the photo.



First option was to change the look to sunrise, then add a grunge texture.
Nice look, but not really where I wanted to go. Saved the layers numbered Option 1

OPTION 2. STORMY NIGHT

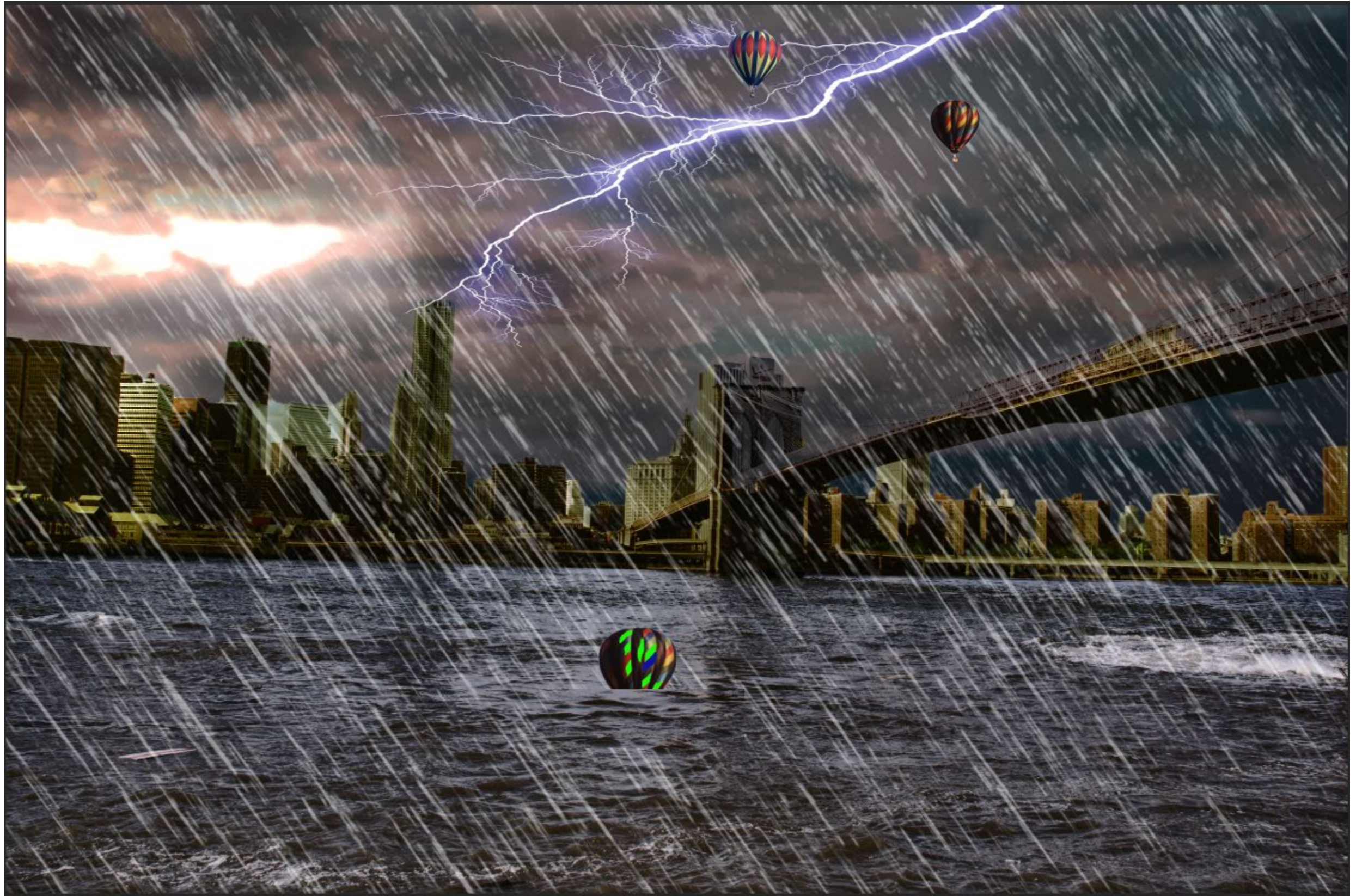


ADD MORE ZIP TO SKY



Three more layers to adjust sky and add rain and lightning.

NYC SKYLINE



Added some balloons to make it all a little strange.

NYC SKYLINE



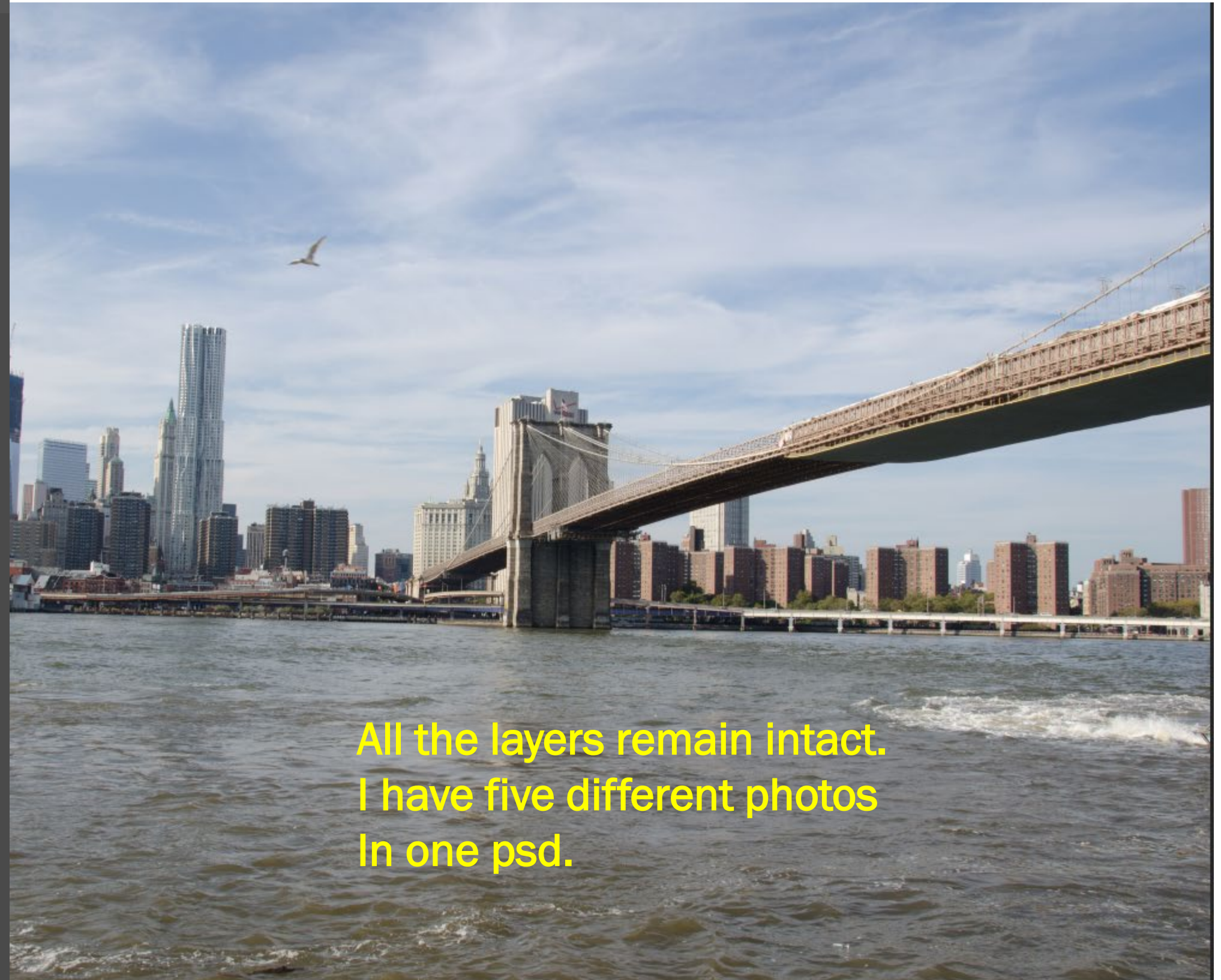
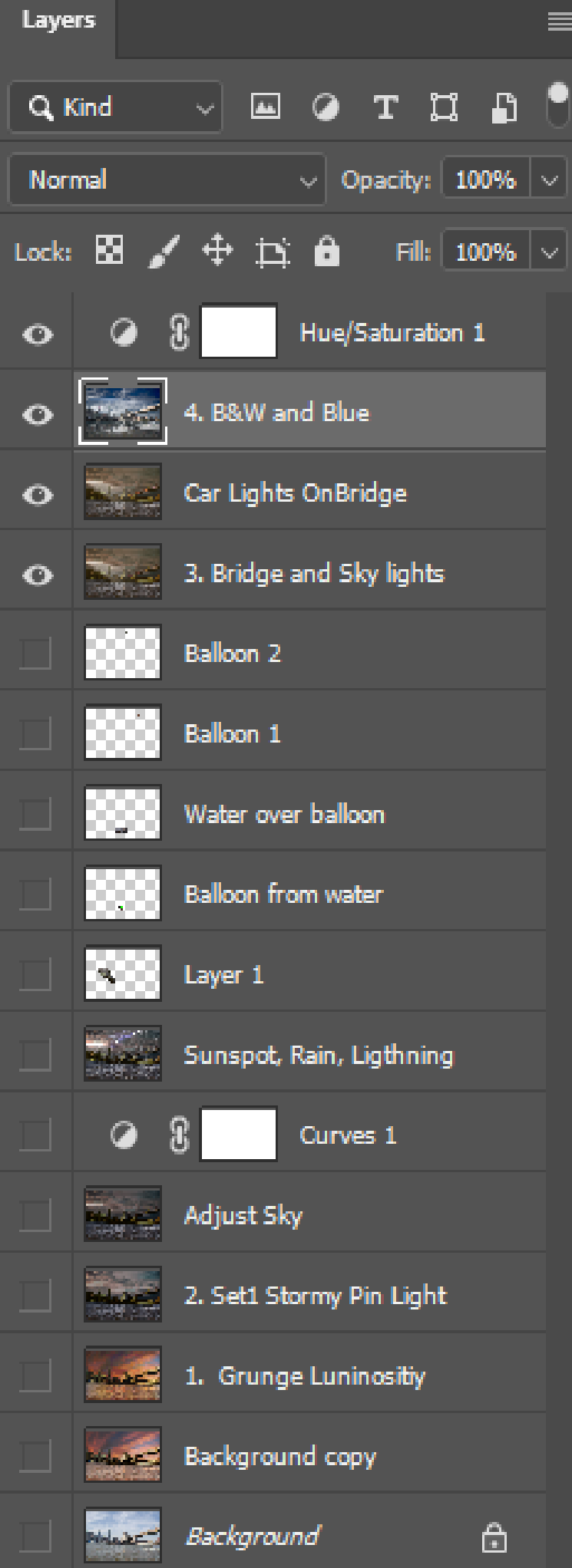
Option 3 was a stormy sky, with car lights added to the bridge and sun rays peeking through.

NYC SKYLINE



Finally decided to add a B&W and Blue, with building shadows in the water.

NYC SKYLINE



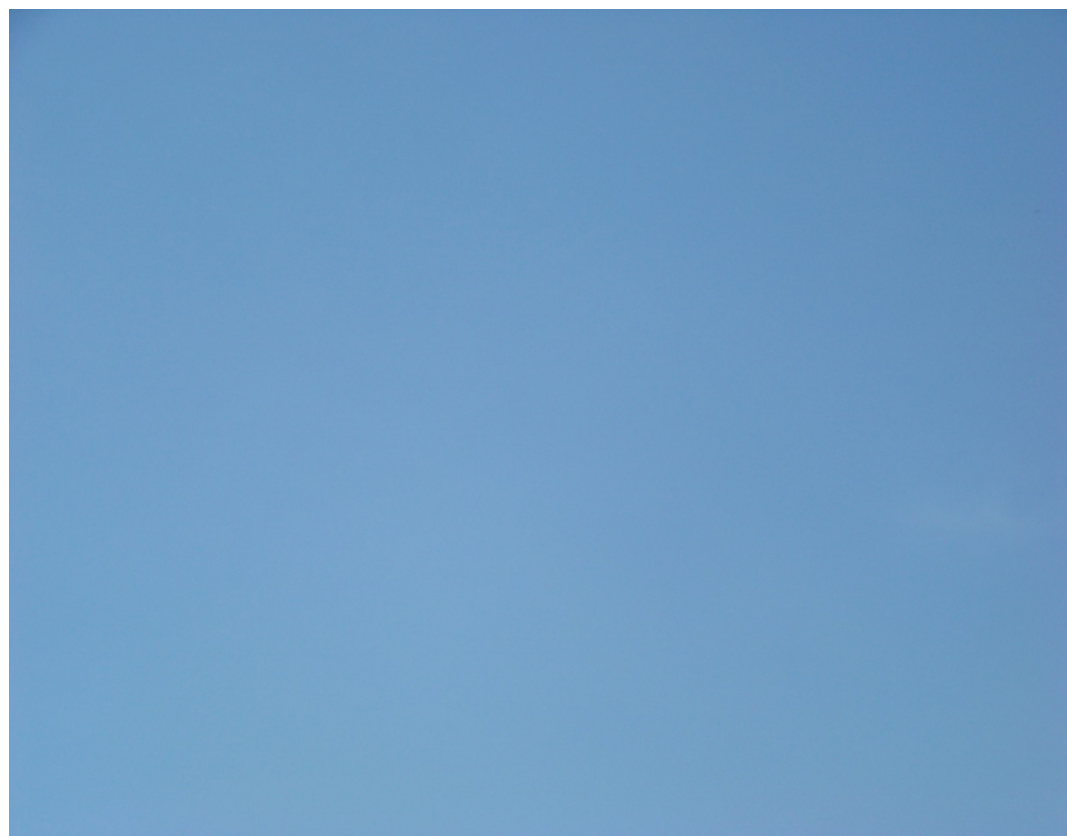
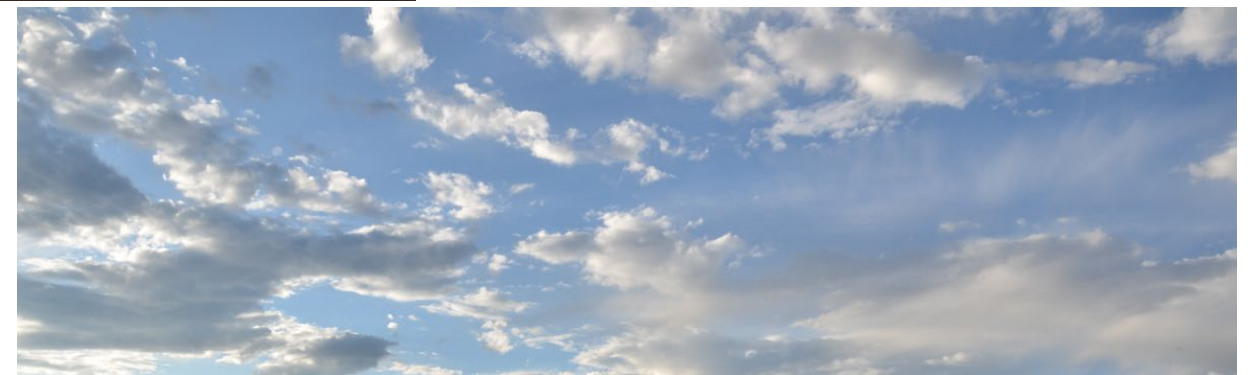
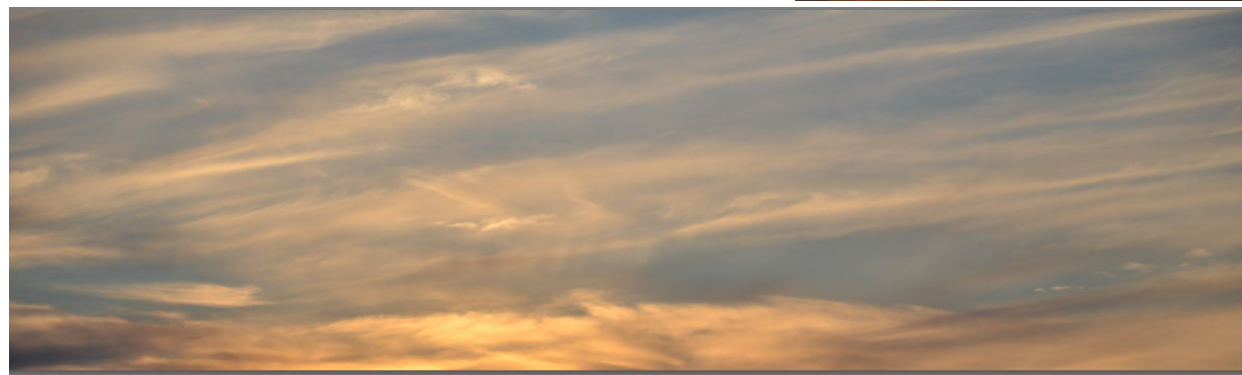
All the layers remain intact.
I have five different photos
In one psd.

ARTIST STUDIOS, ASHVILLE, NC



This shot, lends itself to nothing in particular, however, as a perspective photograph, it has possibilities. Shots up and down stairways are always interesting.

ALWAYS HAVE SKY SHOTS HANDY



REPLACE THE BACKGROUND WITH A CLOUDY SKY
AND WORK WITH SATURATION AND HUE. ADD SOME RAIN...



SKY DOOR #1

Tools Used:

PS Select
Color, Quick
Selection,
Magic Wand.

Paste Into for
Sky.

Hue and
exposure
on door.

Added rust
and rain.



SKY DOOR #1

Tools Used:

PS Select
Color, Quick
Selection,
Magic Wand.

Paste Into for
Sky.

Hue and
exposure
on door.

Too dark.

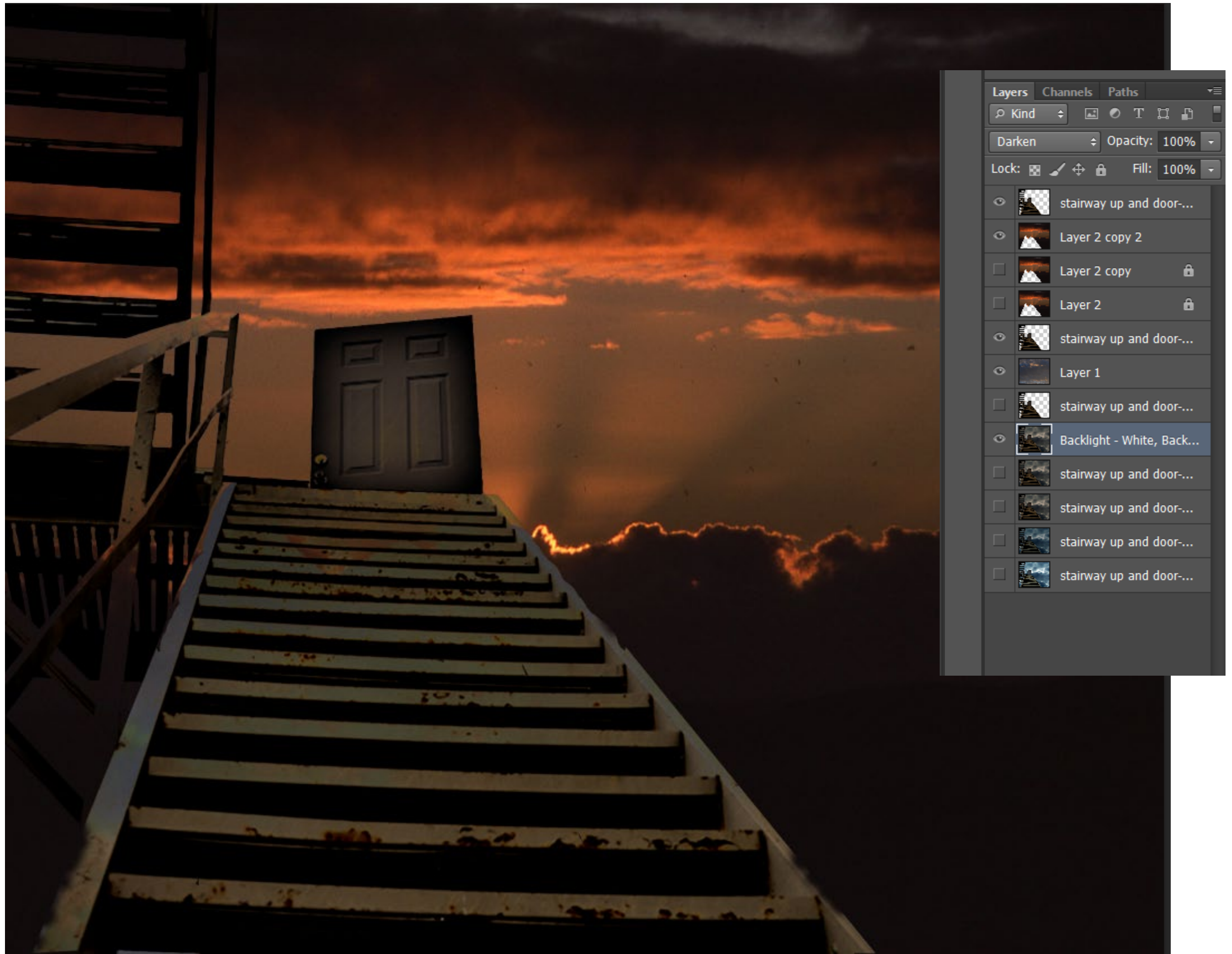


SKY DOOR #2

Tools Used:

New sky seemed to work as well as version #1

I have all my layers , so I can change it as often as I like.



TIMES SQUARE, NYC



Again, not a great photo . . . But . . . It is Times Square, which means so many things to different people.

ROUGH CUT OUT OF A GLASS OF WINE



Thinking about Times Square, vacation, special event, celebrating.

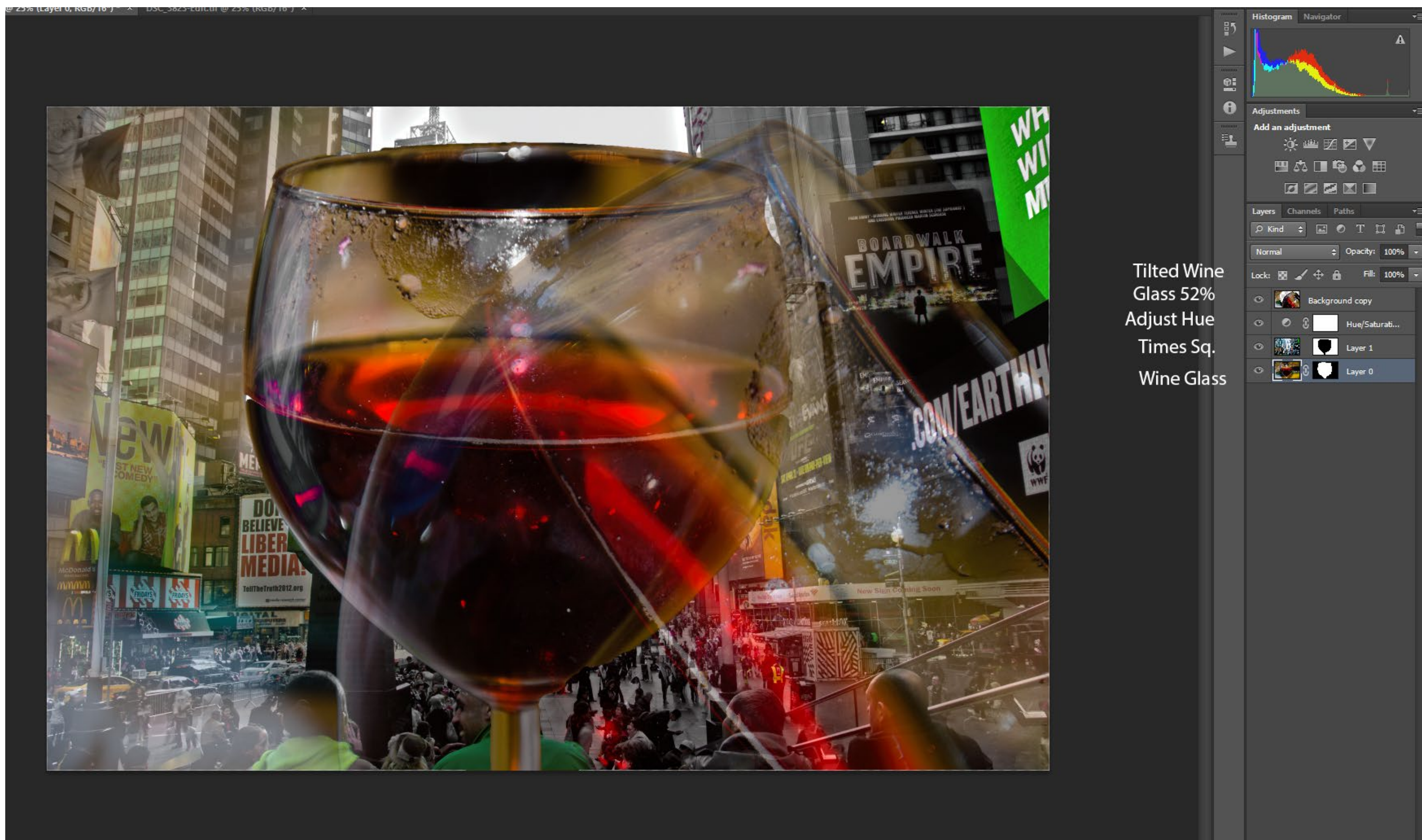
COMBINE THE WINE GLASS WITH TIMES SQ.

Getting
closer.

Paste the
wine on top
of the scene



FINAL ADJUSTMENTS



Tilted Wine
Glass 52%
Adjust Hue
Times Sq.
Wine Glass

Duplicate wine glass and tilt 45 degrees. Give the background buildings a golden hour look.

TOAST OF THE TOWN



ANOTHER USE FOR TIMES SQUARE, NYC



Before Hurricane Sandy

THE DUCKIES TAKE OVER

Add a pond.

Take my photo of the giant rubber duck from another trip.

Resize for mom.

Resize and replicated for babies.



THIS BECOME TRIPLE AMTRAK EXPRESS

Pacific Coast Amtrak. Slow shutter speed.



TRIPLE AMTRAK EXPRESS

Pacific Coast Amtrak. Copy and paste successively smaller versions of the train. Add texture to the sky.

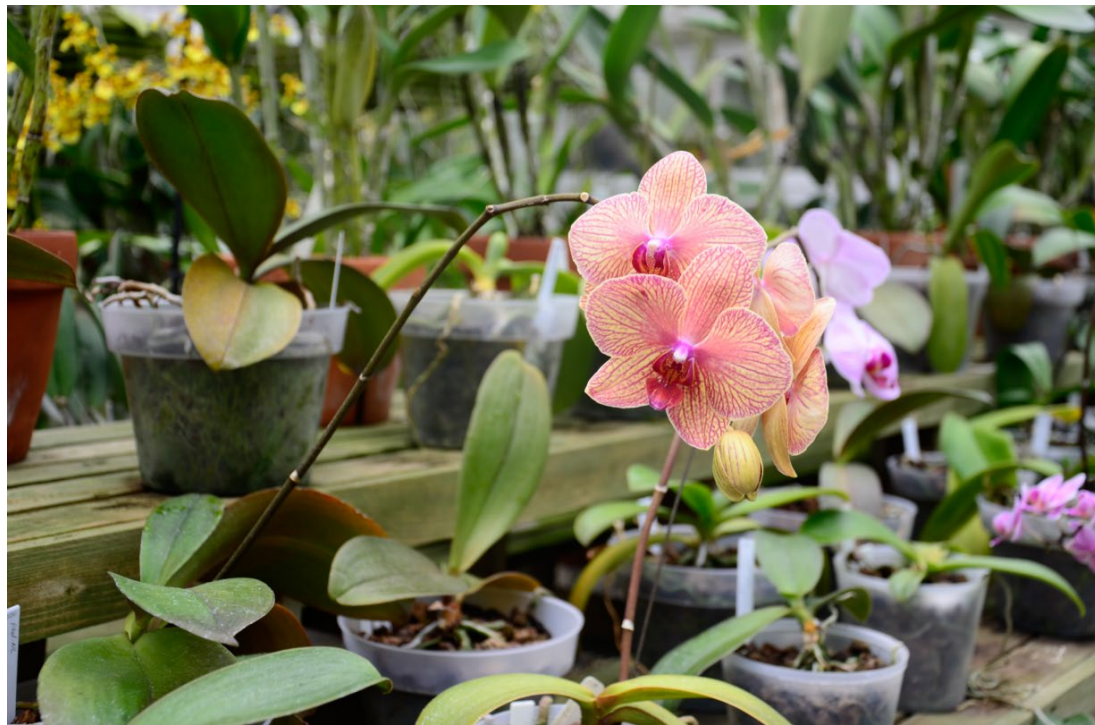


AT SOME POINT, WE ALL WORK WITH FLOWERS

From simple glow effects (PS or Topaz Glow)



AT SOME POINT, WE ALL WORK WITH FLOWERS



To more elaborate effects using,

- . image duplication
- . motion trails
- . Texture background (one texture, duplicated, horizontally flipped and merged with original) background.

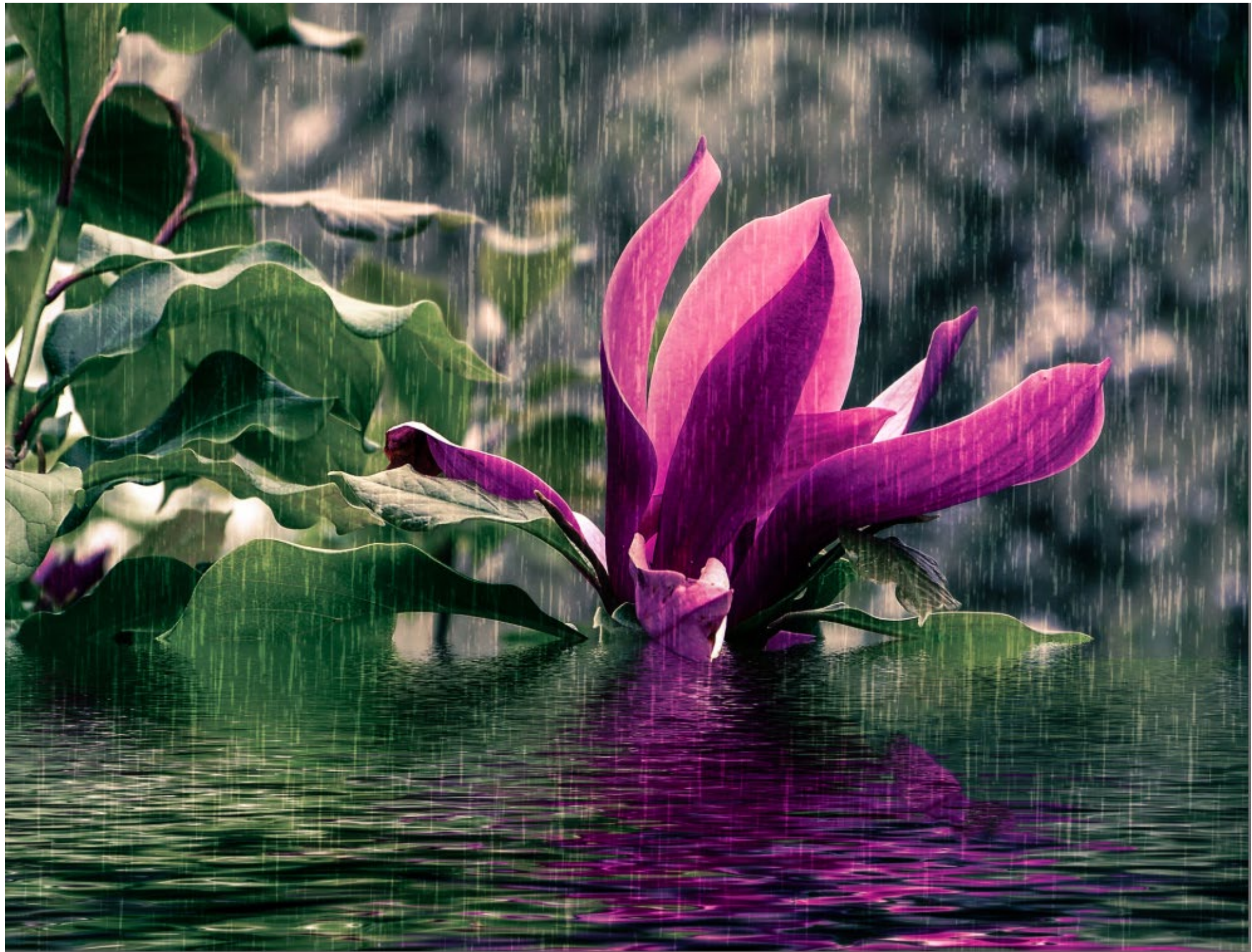


AT SOME POINT, WE ALL WORK WITH FLOWERS



Then I decided to try something with a more natural look.

AT SOME POINT, WE ALL WORK WITH FLOWERS



Desaturated and blurred background. Added rain, pond, light rays . . . for a natural look.

ORLEANS BEACH, CAPE COD



An overcast, blah day, with a whole lot of potential

KC SKYLINE FROM WWI MEMORIAL



Set 1. Change the tone with Topaz Restyle and pop in a lightbulb

ADD MORE TO GIVE A SENSE OF DESOLATION



Added the chair and the suitcase and hat from my collection of Cut Outs.
Then I got another idea for the same photo, so. . .

I DECIDED TO TRY A SUPER MOON LOOK



A new sky from my collection

ADDED A CHAIR, SUITCASE & HAT AND COKE



I purposely placed them back a bit to add more depth.

MADE IT A BIT LESS “DARK”



ORLEANS BEACH FINALS

Now I have three looks
from the same photo



TOOLS I USE

- Lightroom and Lightroom Presets and photo adjustments
- Photoshop Filters
- Photoshop Actions
- Topazlabs products: especially Studio 2, Restyle and Adjust
- Mystical Gen: Light Pack and Weather Pack
- Exposure Software: Eye Candy, for smoke, reflections, shadows and more
- Flaming Pear: Flood
- Corel: Painter (unique brush sets)
- Anthropics: Landscape Pro – individual control of sky, land, water and buildings

LIGHTS ARE ALWAYS A GOOD TOOL



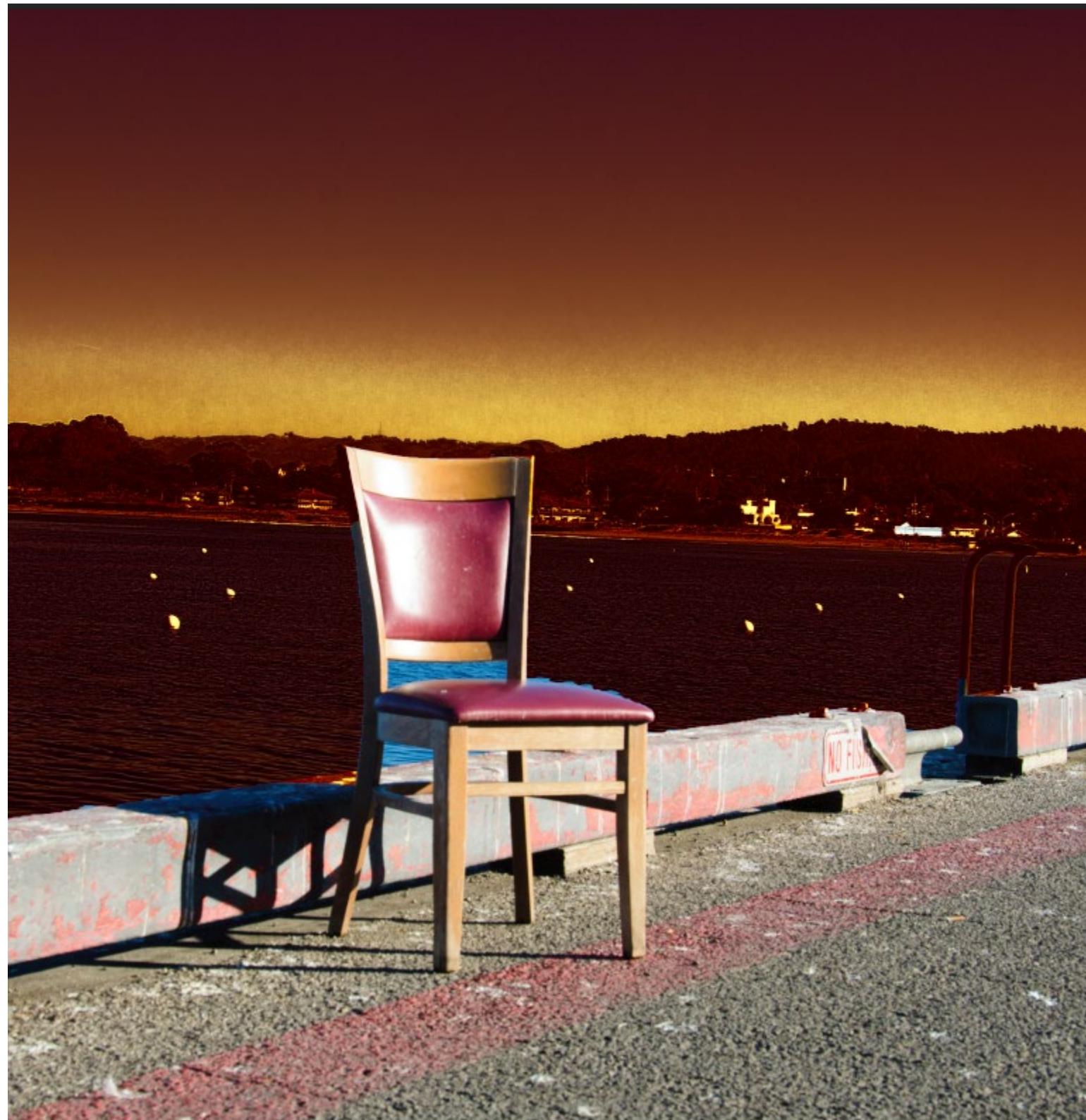
Light sources I use:
PS textures, brushes, lights
My own backgrounds
Third party light packs

FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE SPOOKY



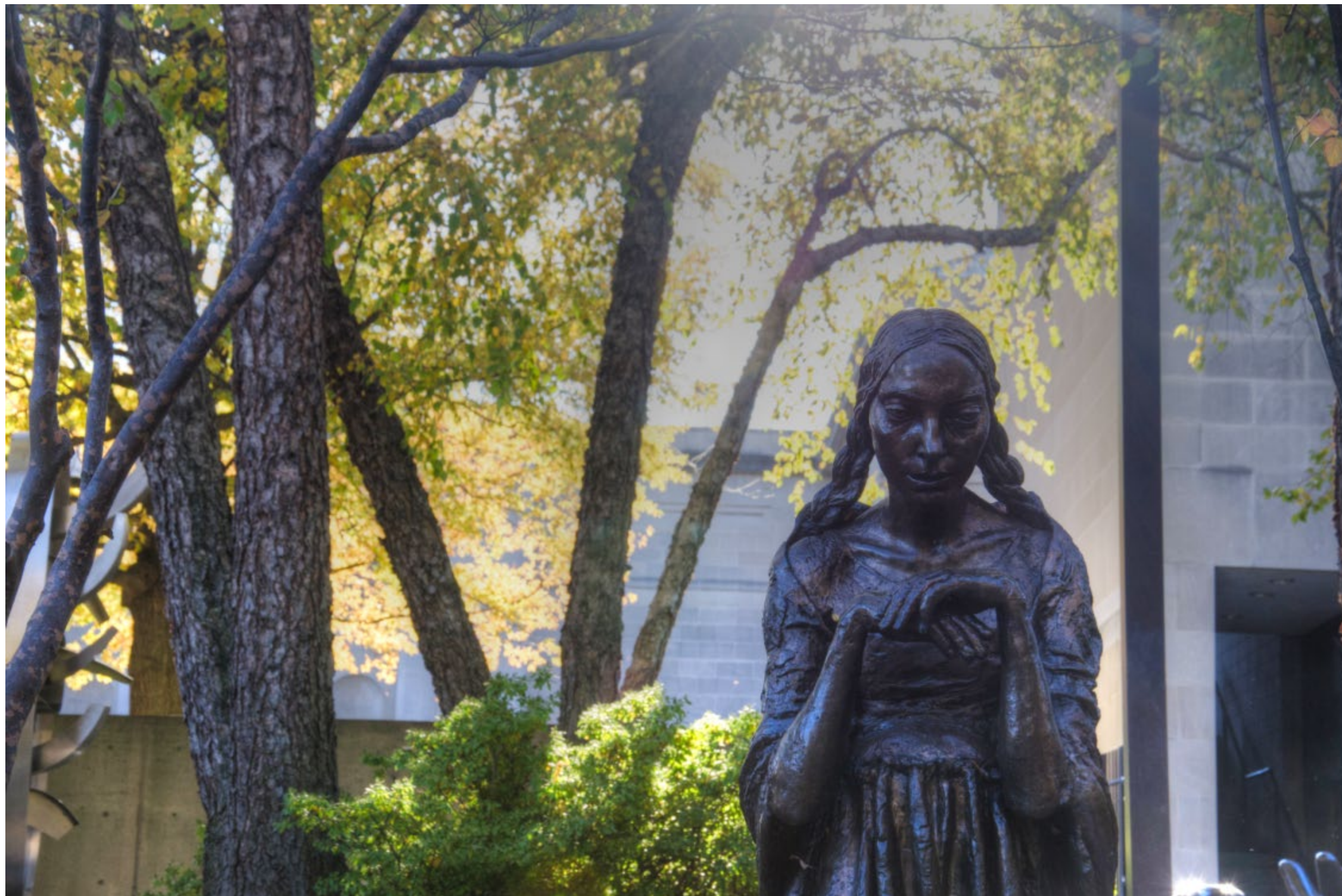
I took this photo with the INTENT of doing something with it.

FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE SPOOKY



Change the tone of colors.

FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE SPOOKY



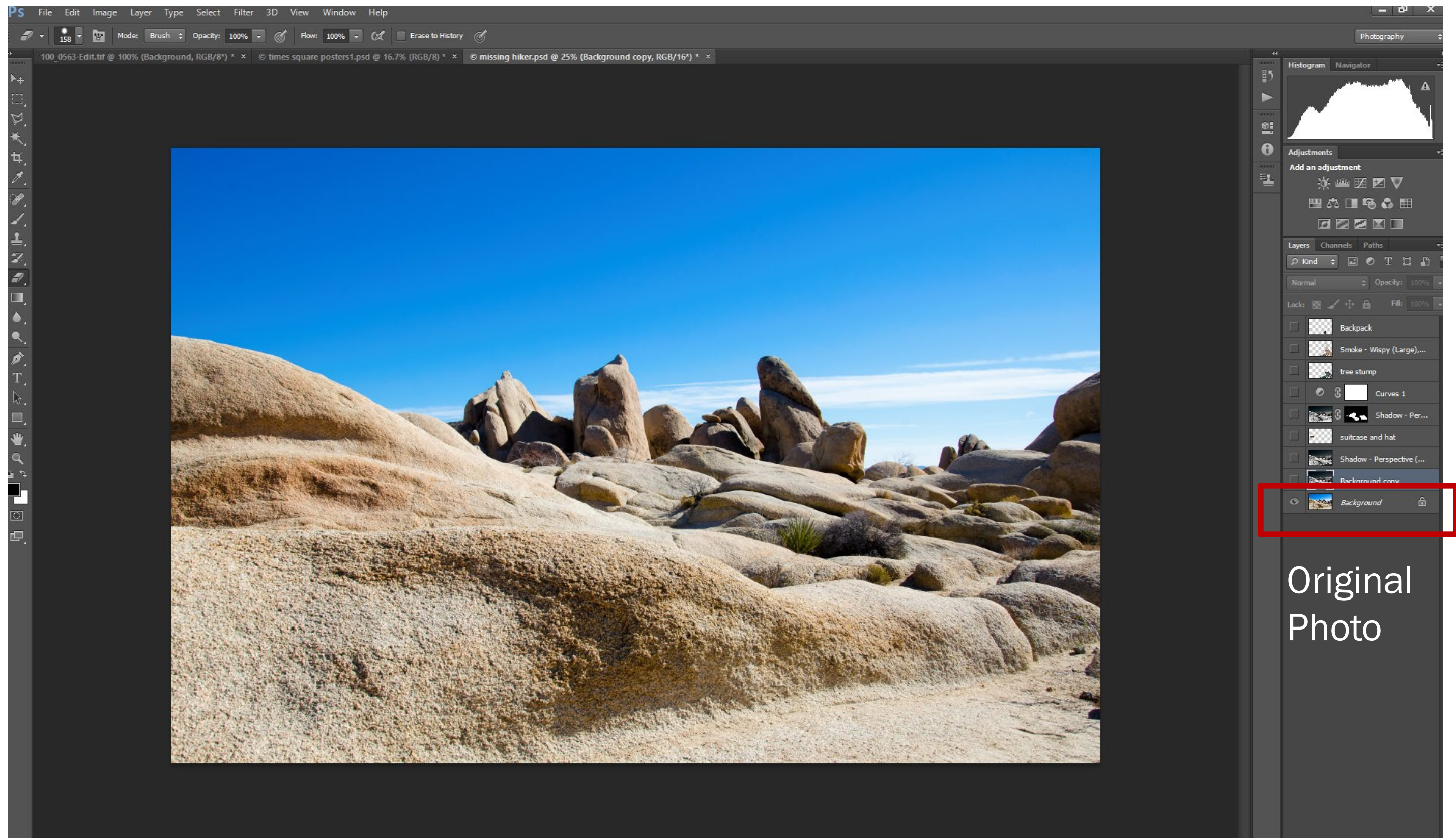
Grab an interesting photo of a statue

HAVE A SEAT, PLEASE



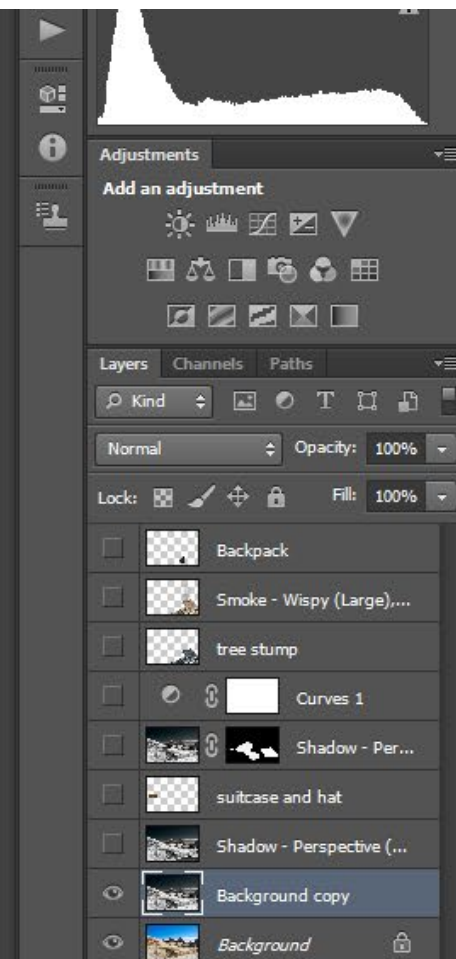
Add some “spooky” background and combine.

JOSHUAL TREE PARK, CALIFORNIA



Landscapes are great starting points, because they lend themselves to so many ideas.

MISSING HIKER



New
Layer
B&W for ground.
Darkened sky.

MISSING HIKER



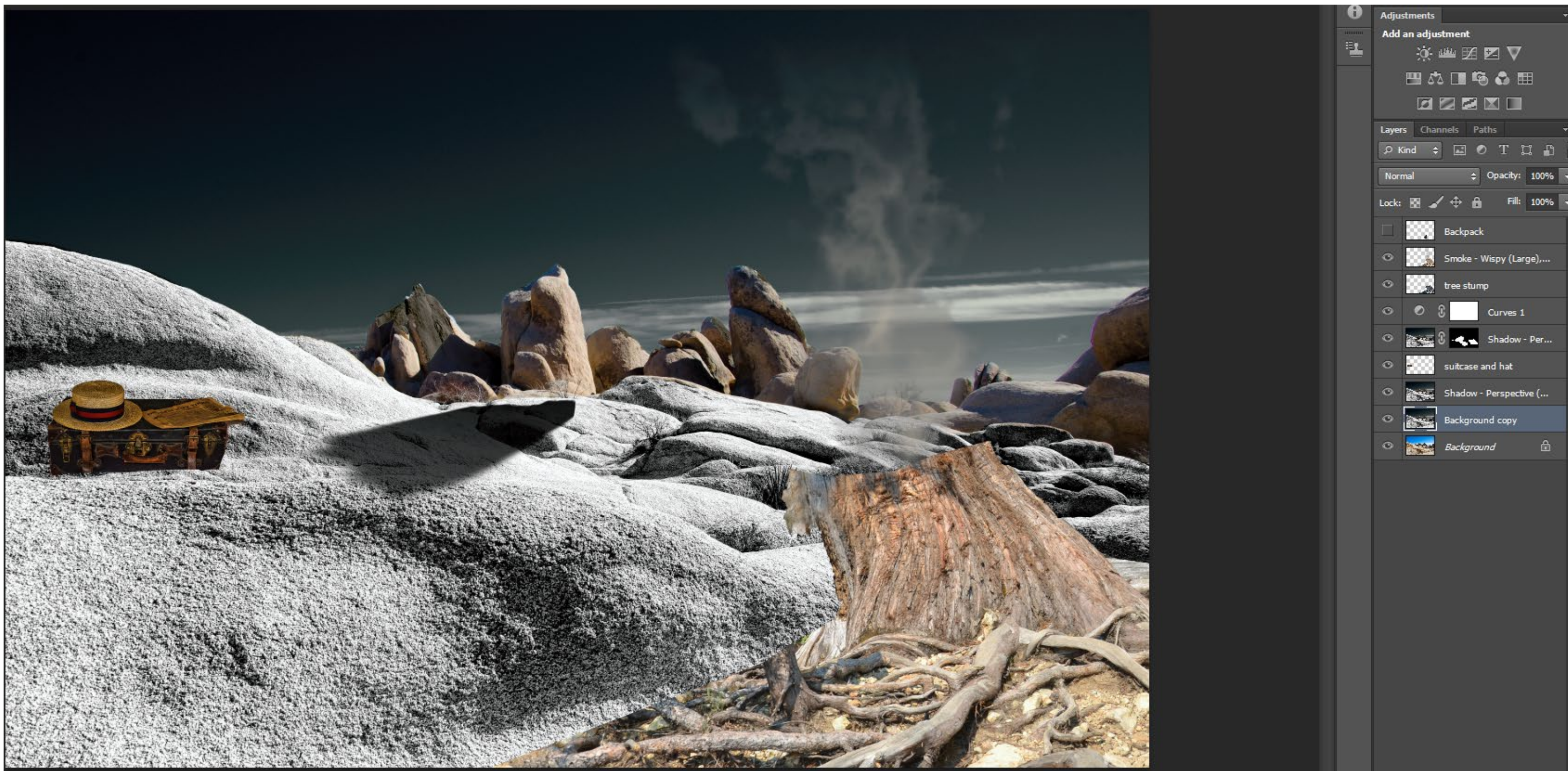
New Layer. Added shadow, perspective at bottom right.

MISSING HIKER



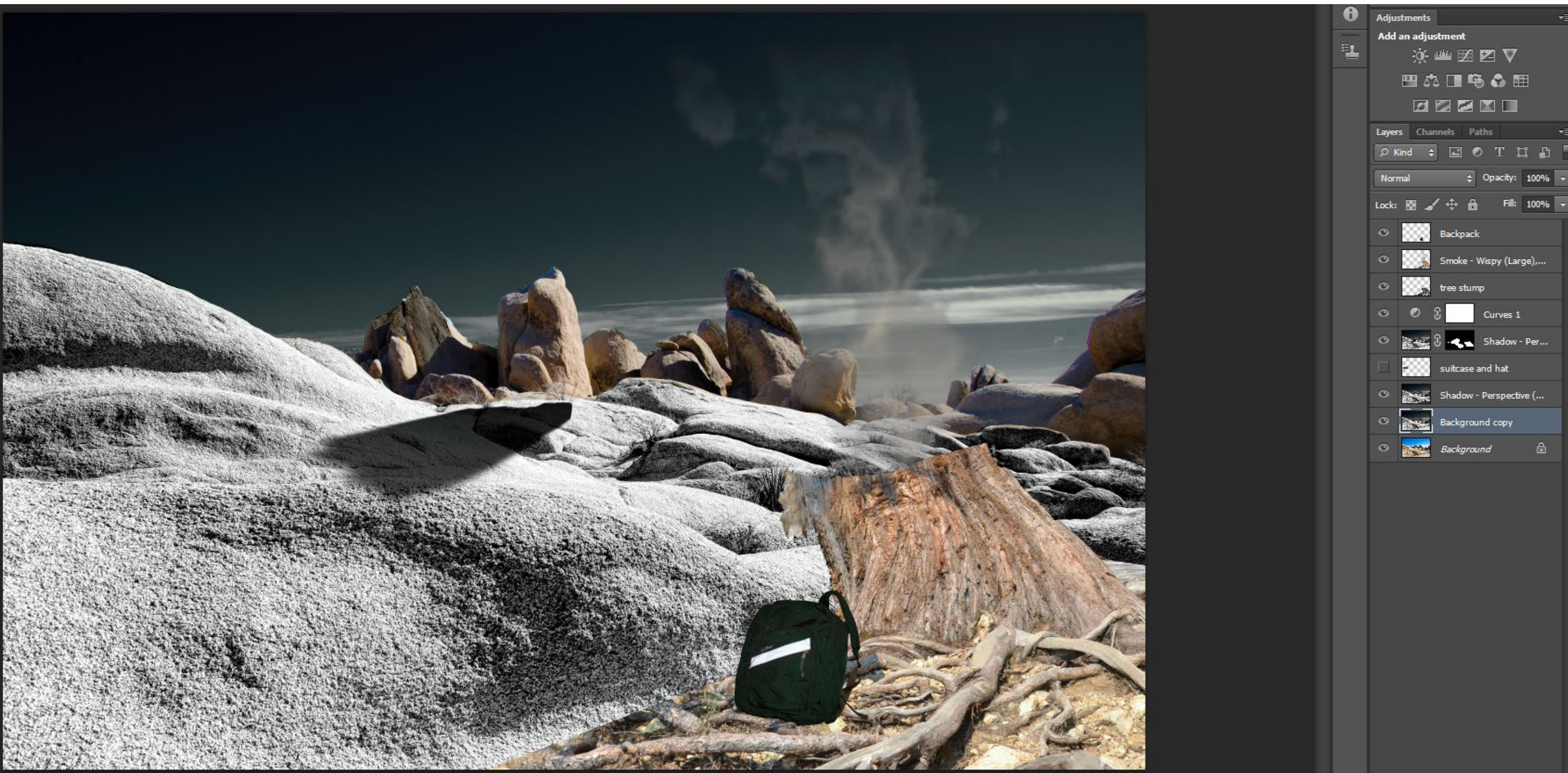
New Layer, added shadow, perspective for rock.
New Layer, added suitcase and hat.

MISSING HIKER, FINAL



New Layer, added tree stump from another photo.
New Layer, added smoke from stump to emulate remains of fire.

MISSING HIKER, FINAL



New Layer, added backpack. Removed Suitcase.

SIDE BY SIDES

View of Brooklyn Bridge.

Modified sky. Added saturation to building on left.

Made right side of photo and street black and white, then added brown back in.



SIDE BY SIDES

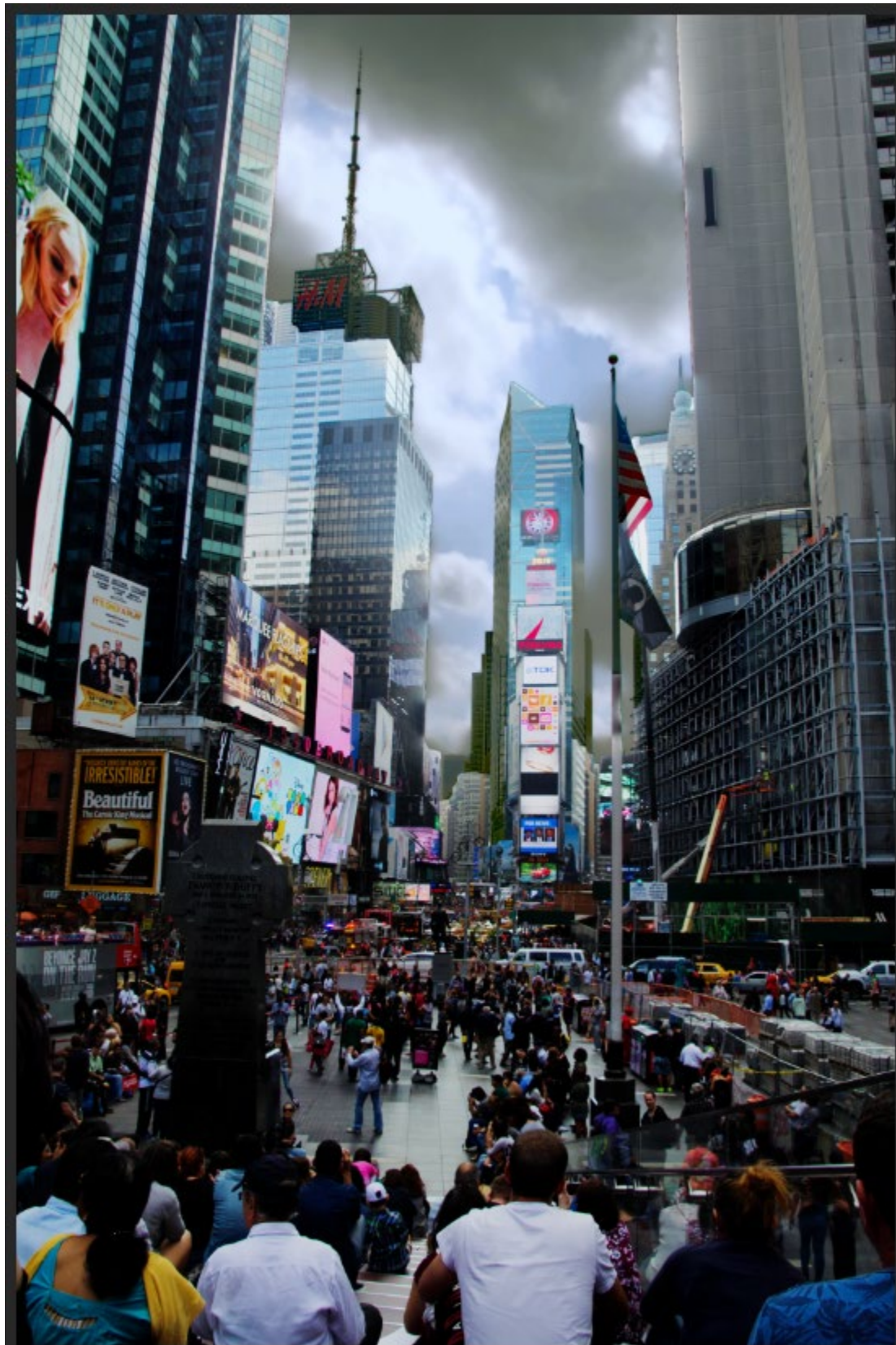


NYC Skyline from Central Park South
Crop

Topaz Restyle for whole photo

Selective use of Topaz Glow on buildings

SIDE BY SIDES

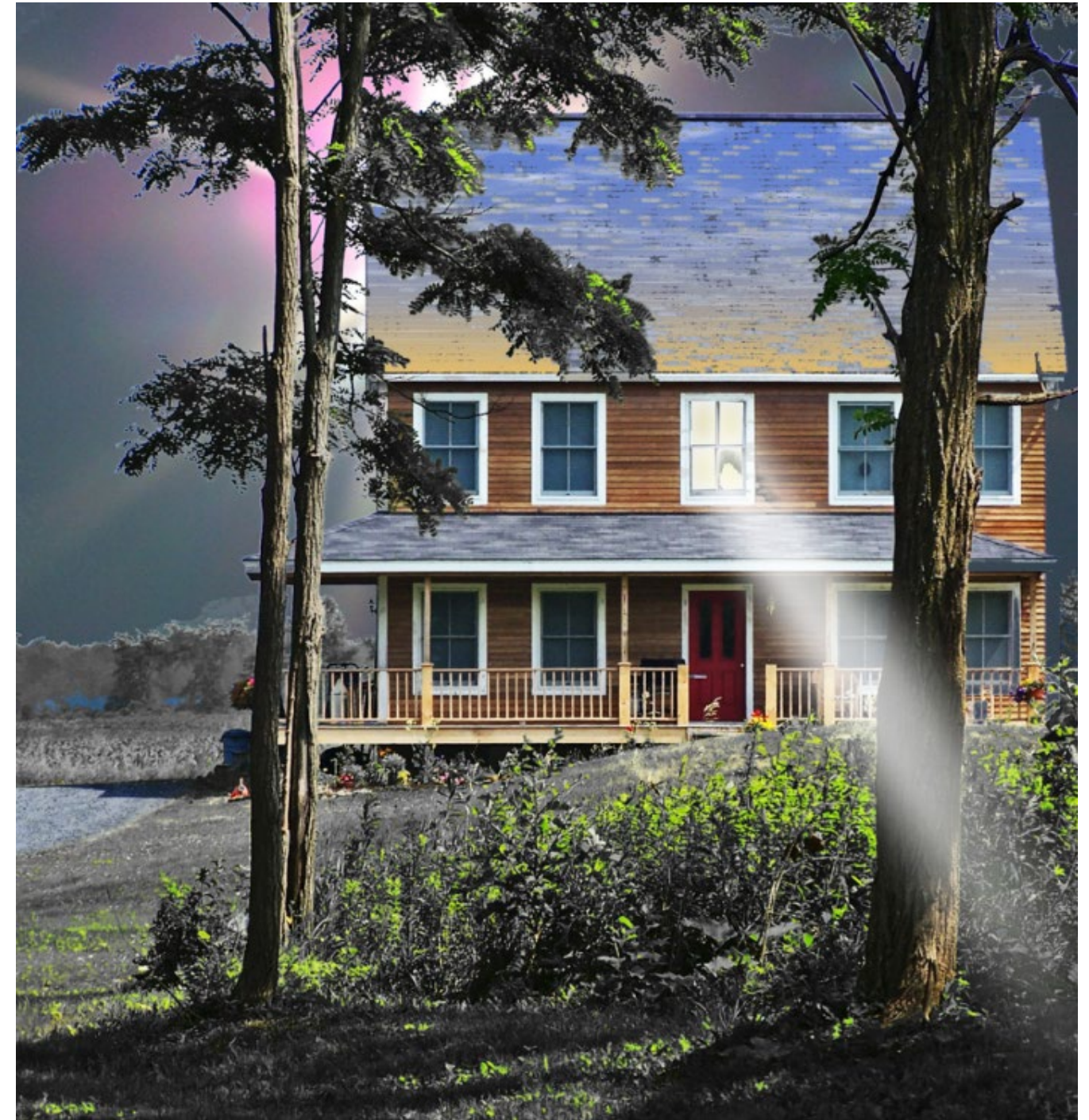


Cropped Times Square. Change background. Add PS warped posters to sides.

SIDE BY SIDES



My Country Home
Change sky and land.
Add a spot light from the window.



SIDE BY SIDES



A junk truck in a field near
Marietta, Ohio 1968

I did not actually do the
creative version until 2014



SIDE BY SIDES



1. View of Sea of Galilee
2. Man fishing Rocky Mt. National Park
3. Flowers at NY Botanic Garden
4. Giant Flower Show



REMINDER: KEEP ALL YOUR LAYERS

Layers make it easy to keep several variations of your work in a single file.

Note the subdued use of water under the walkway.

Tools:

One of my sky shots for moon.

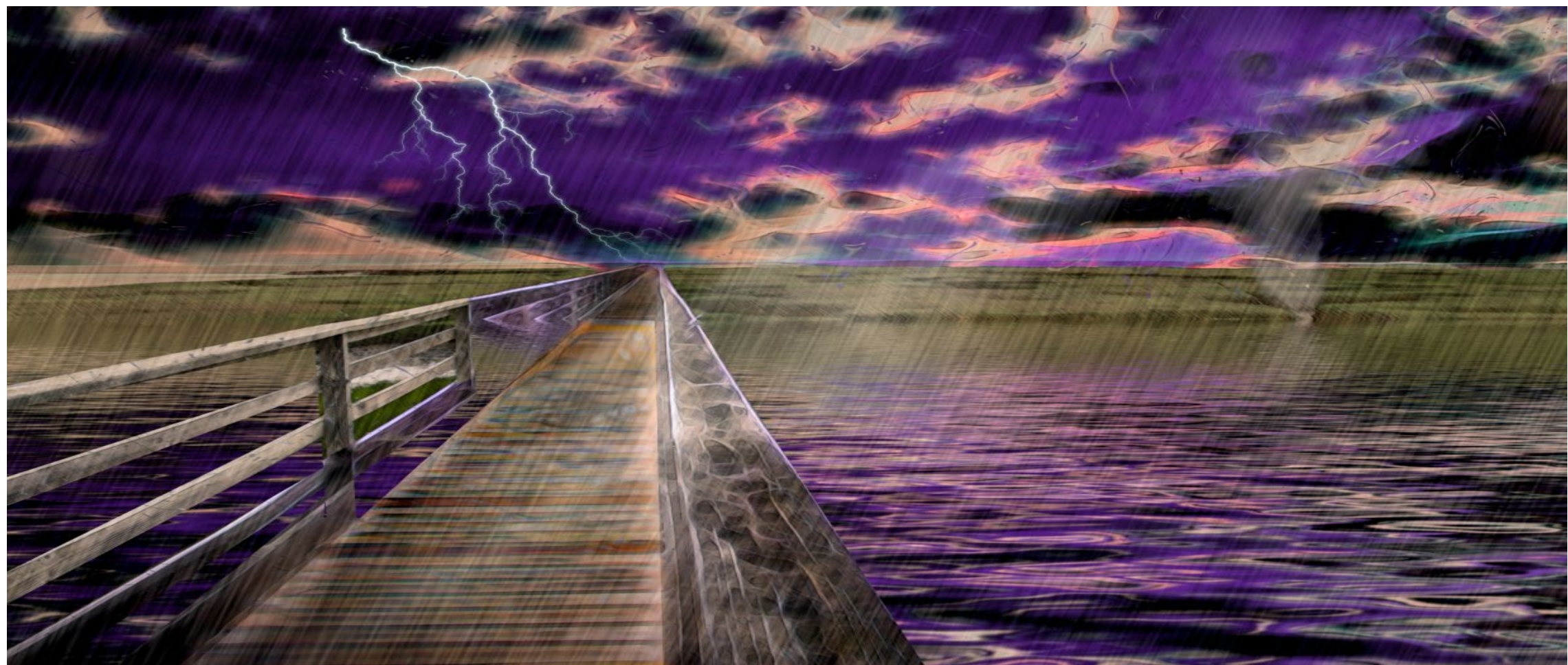
A sphere I saved in my file system.

Topaz Restyle and Glow,

Add ring around sphere



MORE IDEAS



MORE IDEAS



IF YOU SEE A FORK IN THE ROAD . . .



Where I am going and where I have been. The End.