

BLACK & WHITE CONVERSION TECHNIQUE

ENHANCING CONTRAST BY DODGE & BURN

Search on the internet for "Black and White Conversion Technique" results in excess of 14,800,000 results. So, at the end of the day you have more than handful of techniques or Photoshop actions to fiddle around with to get the desired effect in your final B&W image.

Some of the most common techniques we come across for B&W Conversions are

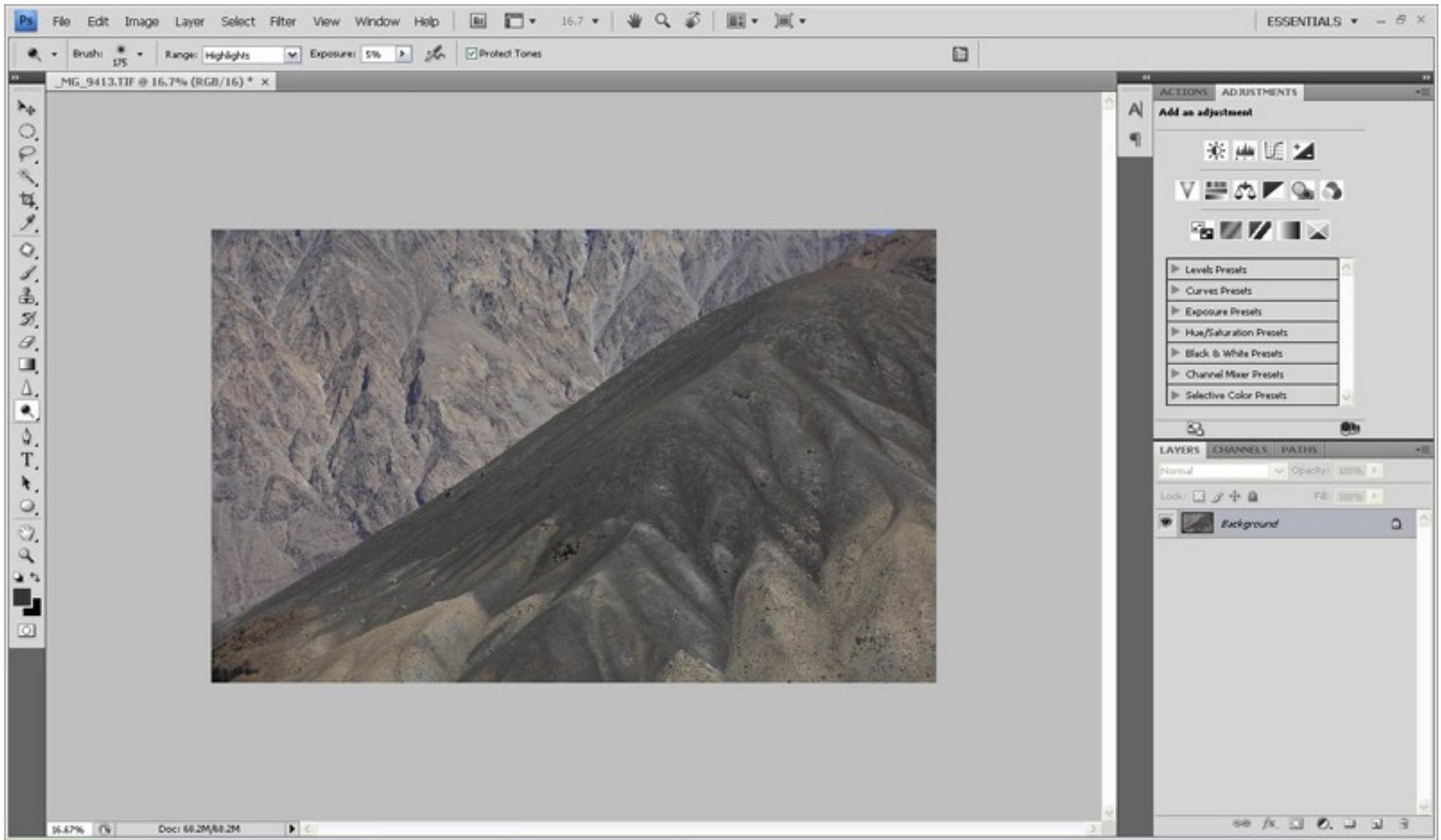
- Black and White Option
- Channel Mixer
- Desaturate Option
- Convert to Grayscale
- Hue Saturation Method
- Lab Method

Along with this we do have some very fantastic plugins by companies like NIK Software in the form of Silver Efex Pro

Each and every of the above B&W Conversion technique has its own advantages or disadvantages in the form of control or even the ease of use or getting the final output.

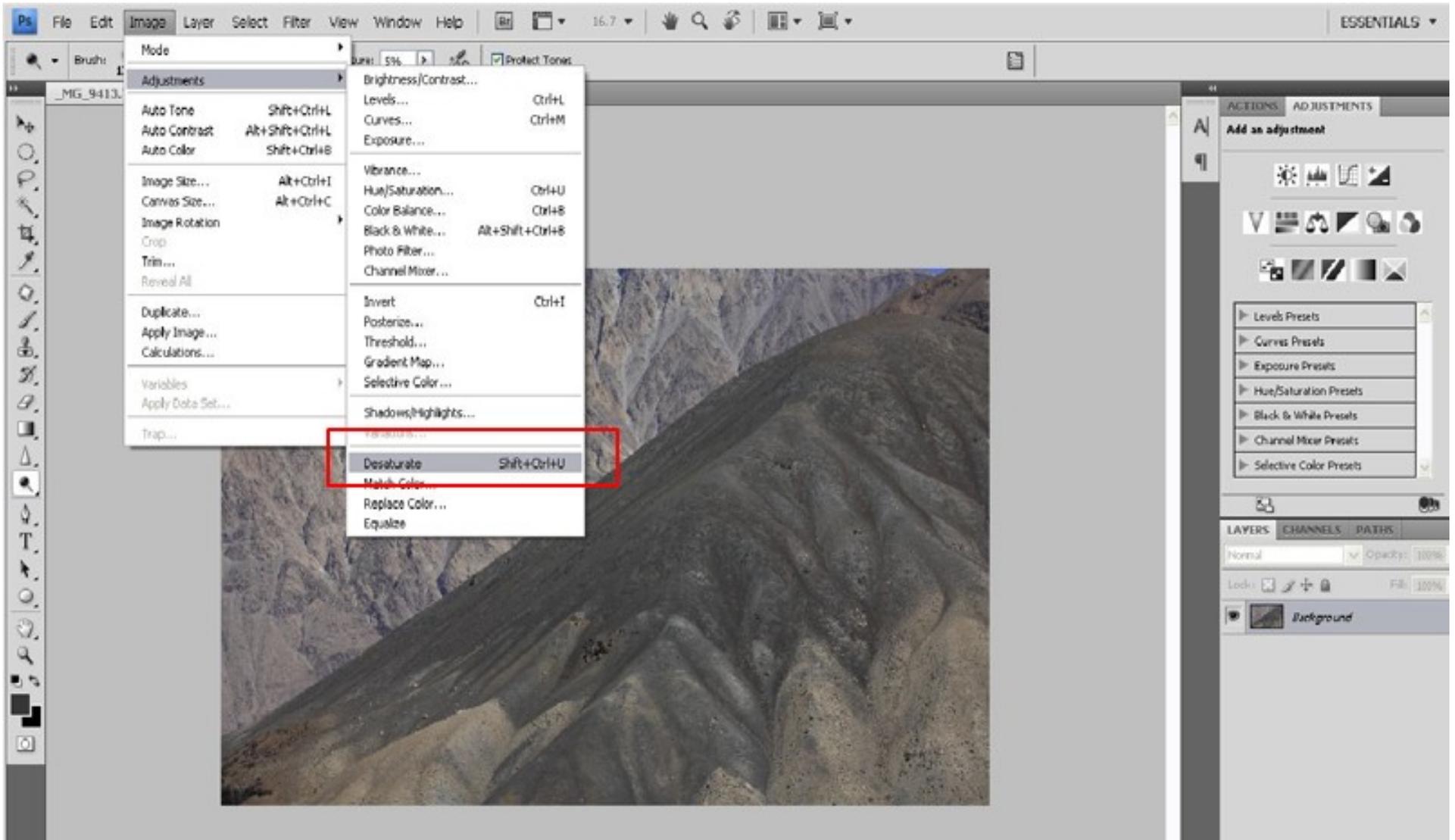
In this current edition of Landscape-Wizards Photoshop Technique we will be demonstrating a simple way of enhancing Contrast in a B&W Image using the Dodge and Burn technique. Unlike the conventional way of using Dodge and Burn where the technique is used to either Lighten the shadow or darken the highlights respectively, in the following technique we will be using it in the opposite way to increase the overall contrast of the image. Using this technique will give a better control on the dynamic range and the contrast of the image and also avoids the overhead of applying the global contrast using Brightness and Contrast setting or even going in for complex selections for applying selective enhancements.

Its a very simple technique which can be applied to an image using simple 6 steps using the inbuilt Dodge and Burn tools in the Tools pallet of the Photoshop application.



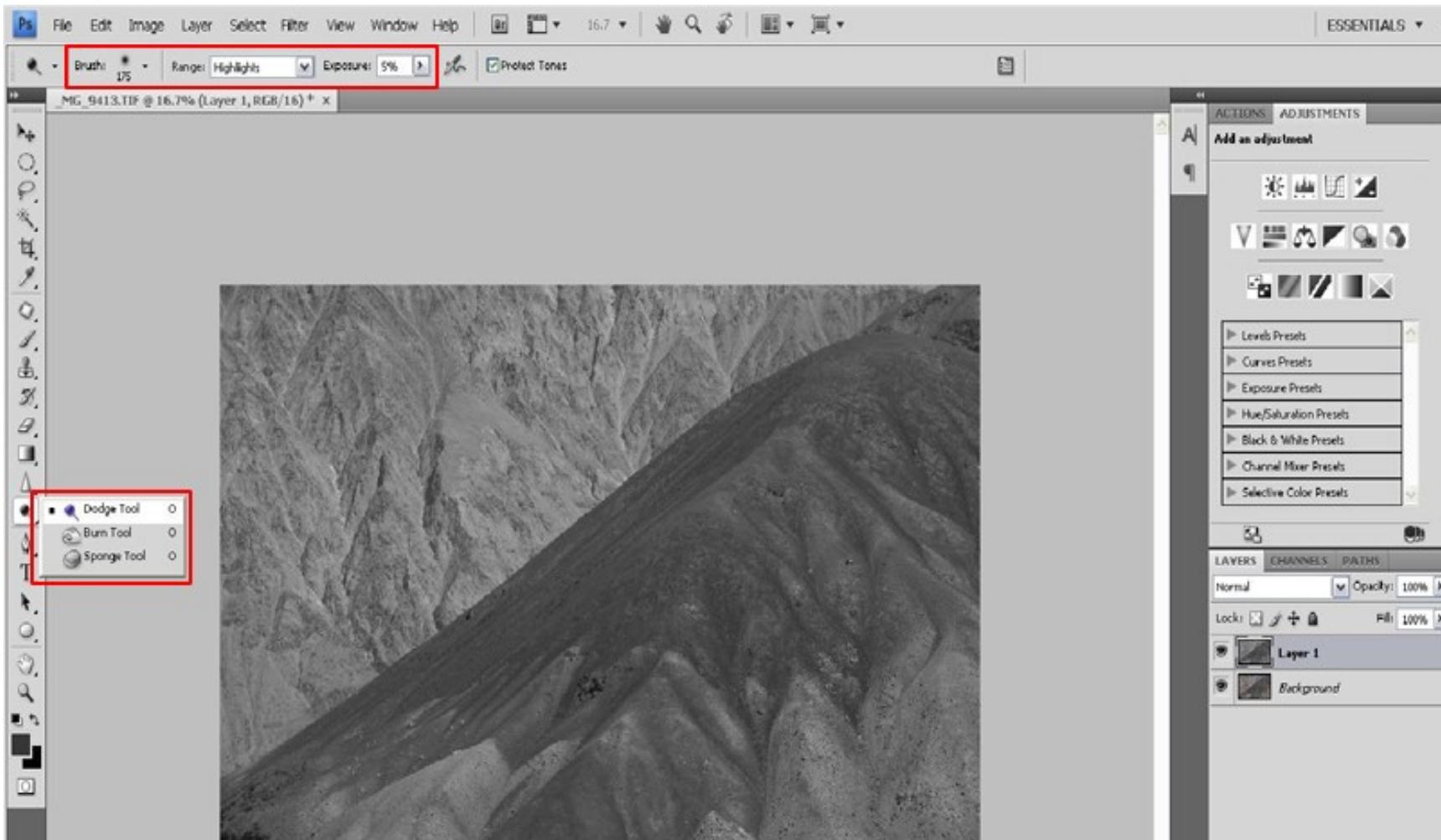
STEP 1:

OPEN THE IMAGE ON WHICH YOU WANT TO APPLY THE B&W ENHANCEMENT



STEP 2:

DUPLICATE THE LAYER AND CONVERT IT TO BASIC B&W BY USING DESATURATE OR CONVERT TO GRAYSCALE MODE

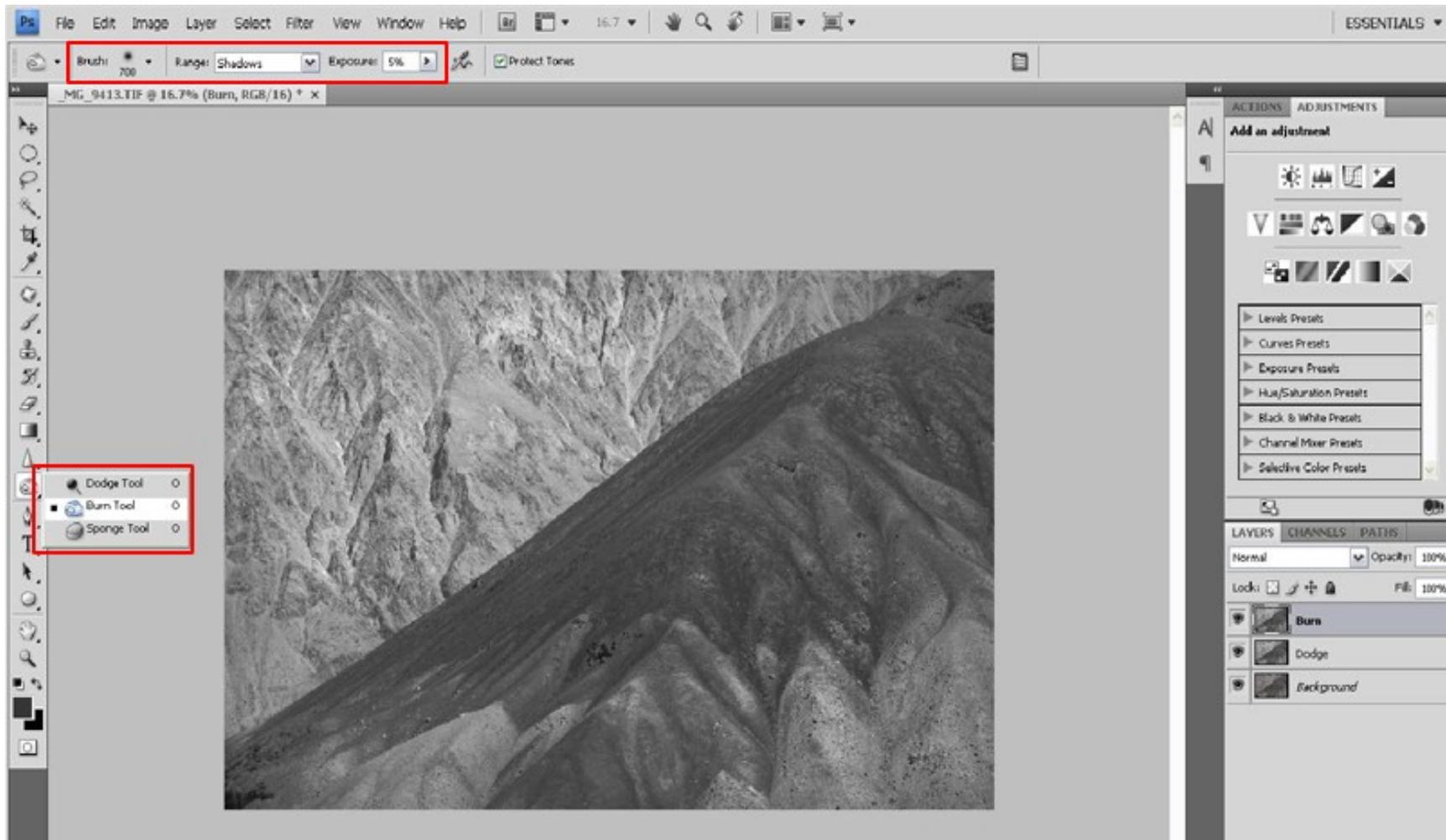


STEP 3:

CHOOSE DODGE TOOL AND SELECT THE EXPOSURE TO BE AROUND 3%-5% AND A SOFT BRUSH. SELECT HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RANGE DROP DOWN MENU. USING AN APPROPRIATE BRUSH SIZE, PAINT OVER THE HIGHLIGHT REGION OF THE IMAGE.

PS: PAINTING OVER THE SHADOW REGION OF THE IMAGE DURING THIS PROCESS WILL NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT AS WE HAVE EXPLICITLY SELECTED THE HIGHLIGHTS IN THE ABOVE STEP (RANGE).

CONTINUE THIS PROCESS UNTIL YOU HAVE GOT A DESIRED LIFT IN THE TONES IN THE HIGHLIGHT REGION. AS WE ARE USING A STRENGTH OF ABOUT 3%-5% ITS BETTER TO BUILD UP THE OVER ALL EFFECT THAN TO TAKE A HIGHER STRENGTH EFFECT.



STEP 4:

CHOOSE BURN TOOL AND SELECT THE EXPOSURE AROUND 3%-5% AND A SOFT BRUSH. SELECT SHADOW FROM THE RANGE DROP DOWN MENU. USING AN APPROPRIATE BRUSH SIZE, PAINT OVER THE SHADOW REGION OF THE IMAGE.

PS: PAINTING OVER THE HIGHLIGHT REGION OF THE IMAGE DURING THIS PROCESS WILL NOT HAVE ANY EFFECT AS WE HAVE EXPLICITLY SELECTED THE SHADOWS IN THE ABOVE STEP (RANGE).

CONTINUE THIS PROCESS UNTIL YOU HAVE GOT A DESIRED LIFT IN THE TONES IN THE SHADOW REGION. AS WE ARE USING A STRENGTH OF ABOUT 3%-5% ITS BETTER TO BUILD UP THE OVER ALL EFFECT THAN TO TAKE A HIGHER STRENGTH EFFECT.

STEP 5:

REPEAT THE ABOVE STEP BY GOING BACKWARD AND FORWARD INTO STEP 3 OR STEP 4.

STEP 6:

ONCE THE DESIRED EFFECT IS ACHIEVED FLATTEN THE IMAGE AND RE-SIZE AND SHARPEN FOR FINAL PRESENTATION.



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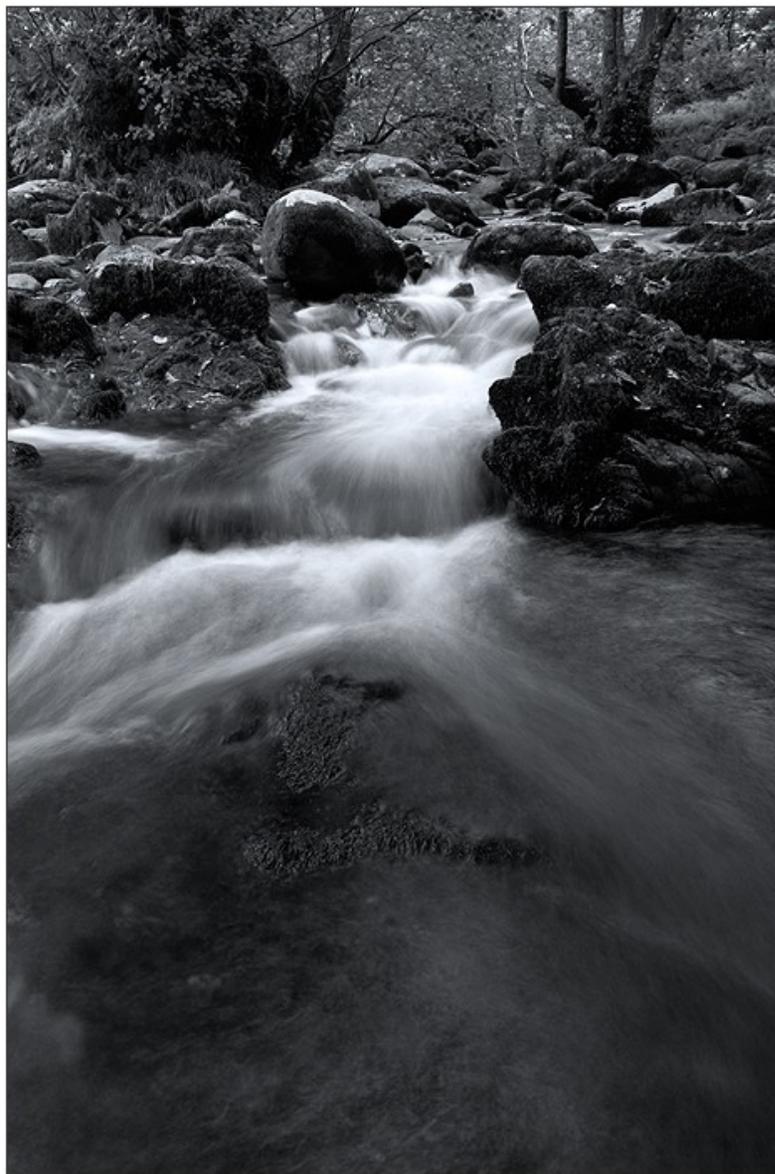
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*“DODGING AND BURNING ARE STEPS TO TAKE CARE OF MISTAKES GOD MADE IN
ESTABLISHING TONAL RELATIONSHIPS.”*

ANSEL ADAMS