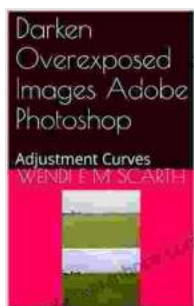# Darken Overexposed Images in Adobe Photoshop: A Comprehensive Guide

Overexposure occurs when an image has too much light, resulting in a washed-out appearance with blown-out highlights and a lack of detail. While it's often easier to avoid overexposure by using proper lighting techniques when taking a photo, it can still happen, especially in challenging situations such as shooting in bright sunlight.

Fortunately, overexposed images can be darkened and salvaged using Adobe Photoshop, a powerful image editing software. This comprehensive guide will provide step-by-step instructions on how to darken overexposed images in Photoshop using various techniques, including adjusting the histogram, manipulating levels, using curves, lightening shadows, and adjusting contrast.

Darken Overexposed Images Adobe Photoshop: Adjustment Curves (Adobe Photoshop Made Easy by Wendi e M Scarth Book 57)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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1. Adjust the Histogram

The histogram is a graphical representation of the distribution of pixel values in an image. In an overexposed image, the histogram will be shifted towards the right, with a large area under the peak. To darken the image, we need to move this peak towards the left.

Go to **Image > Adjustments > Histogram**. The histogram will appear as a graph with the pixel values represented on the X-axis and the number of pixels with that value represented on the Y-axis. The peak of the graph represents the most common pixel value in the image.

To darken the image, drag the right slider (the "black point" slider) towards the left. This will move the peak of the histogram towards the left, reducing the number of overexposed pixels and darkening the overall image.

2. Manipulate Levels

The Levels adjustment allows you to control the black point, white point, and gamma of an image. In the case of an overexposed image, we want to lower the black point to make the dark areas darker.

Go to **Image > Adjustments > Levels**. The Levels dialog box will appear. The Input Levels section has three sliders: the black point (left),the white

point (right),and the gamma (middle). The black point slider controls the darkest pixels in the image, the white point slider controls the brightest pixels, and the gamma slider affects the overall contrast.

To darken the image, drag the black point slider towards the right. This will lower the darkest pixel values, making the shadows darker. You can also adjust the white point slider towards the left to reduce the number of blown-out highlights.

3. Use Curves

The Curves adjustment allows you to fine-tune the tonality of an image using a graphical representation of the image's tonal values. In the case of

an overexposed image, we want to create a curve that reduces the brightness in the highlights and increases the darkness in the shadows.

Go to **Image > Adjustments > Curves**. The Curves dialog box will appear, showing a diagonal line representing the tonal curve of the image. The X-axis represents the input values (the original pixel values),and the Y-axis represents the output values (the adjusted pixel values).

To darken the image, click on the line to create a point. Then, drag the point down to lower the output value for that input value. This will reduce the brightness of the corresponding pixels in the image. You can create multiple points to fine-tune the curve.
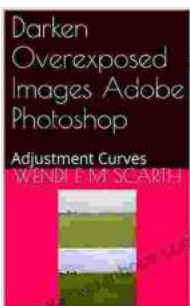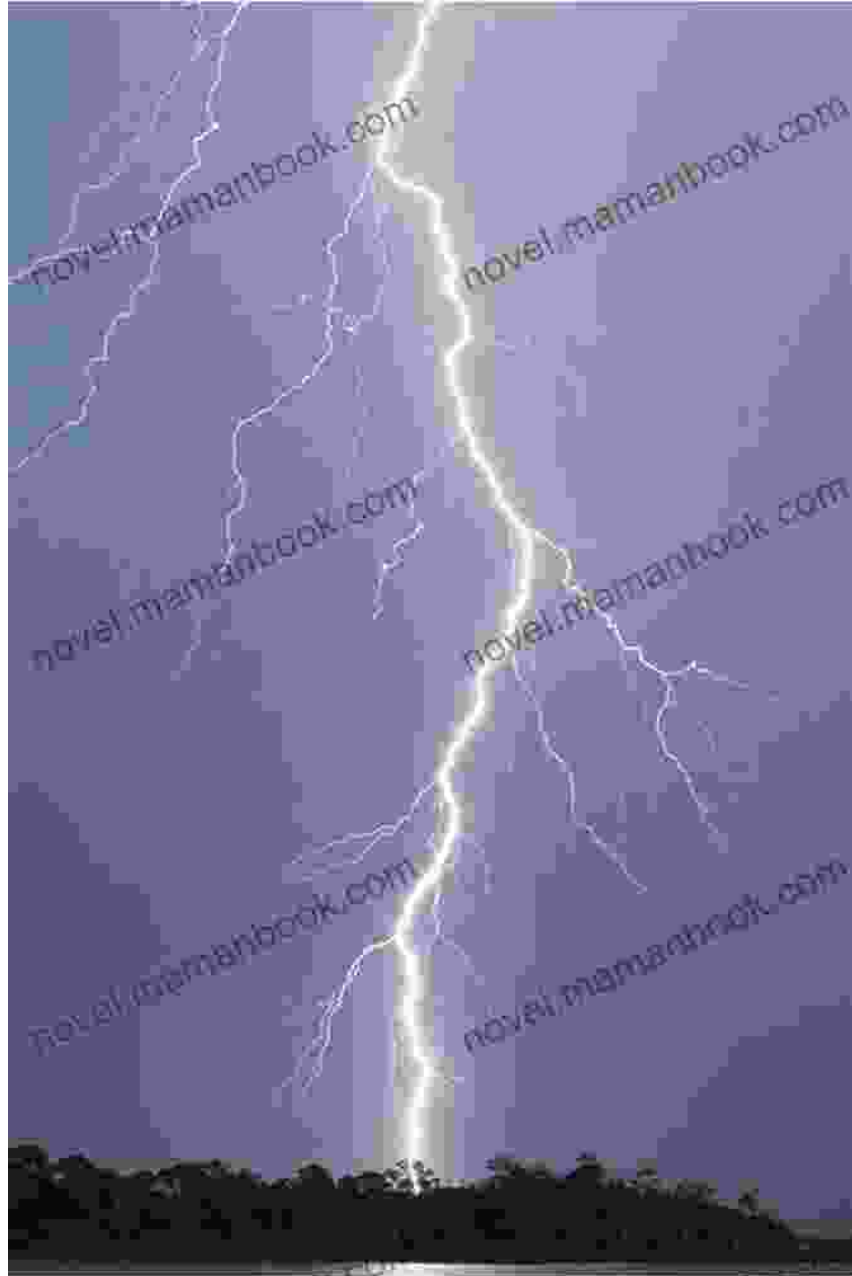

4. Lighten Shadows

Sometimes, simply darkening the overall image may not be enough to bring back detail in the shadows. In such cases, you can use the

Shadow/Highlight adjustment to selectively lighten the shadows.

Go to **Image > Adjustments > Shadow/Highlight**. The Shadow/Highlight dialog box will appear. The Shadows section has three sliders: the Shadow Amount (left),the Radius (middle),and the Tonal Width (right). The Shadow Amount slider controls the amount of lightening applied to the shadows, the Radius slider controls the size of the area around each pixel that is affected, and the Tonal Width slider controls the range of tones that are affected.
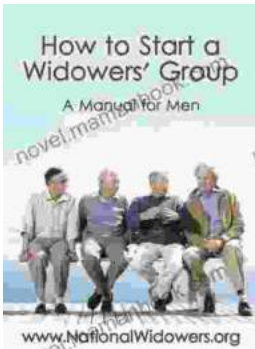
To lighten the shadows, increase the Shadow Amount slider. You can also adjust the Radius and Tonal Width sliders to fine-tune the effect.

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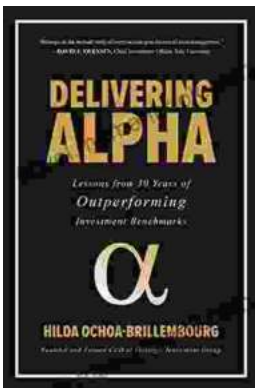
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