Photo Editing / Retouching

For this tutorial I will be showing you how I personally edit my photos. These are just the basics such as removing blemishes and smoothing the skin as well as making other general adjustments.

The image I am using is from my personal stock, and is avaible to use at www.tragicstock.deviantart.com

EXPOSURE

As the image is a little dark, we need to lighten it. To do so, open image > Adjustment > Curves to bring up the Curves box. Once opened, move the curve up and down to get the desired levels. In this image the *pink arrow* represents shadows and dark tones. To make them darker pull the pink section of the curve in the direction of the arrow.
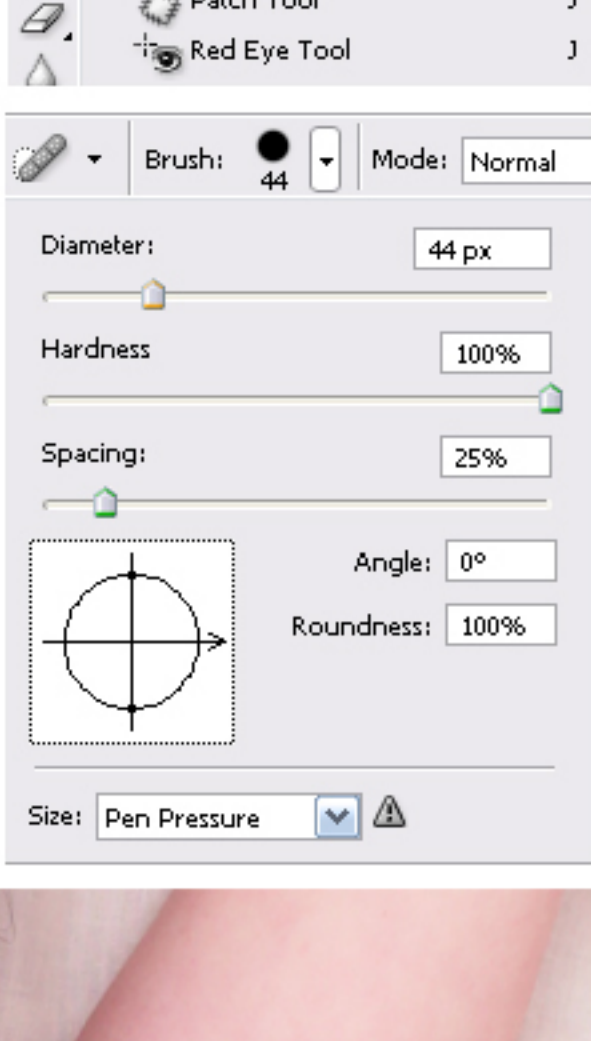
The *green arrow* controlls the higlights. To make the image brighter pull the green section of the curve upwards.

Of course all of the curve can be moved in either directions to make any desired effect.

REMOVING MARKS AND BLEMISHES

Firstly, select the Spot Healing Brush Tool from the tool pallete. then adjust the size of the brush to the required size. Simply click over blemishes to make them disappear ! Note – I prefer to do this on a duplicate later so if I make any mistakes I can simply use the eraser or delete the layer and start again.

Sometimes the heal brush does not works, for instance to tidy up the eyebrows I am going to use the cloning tool. Select it from the tool pallete and adjust the size.

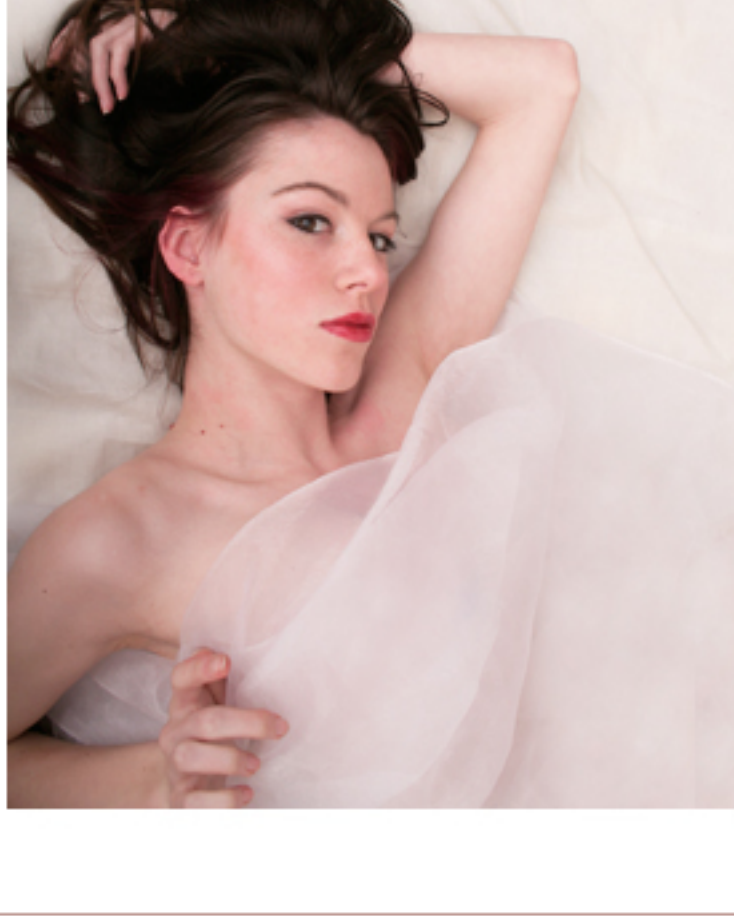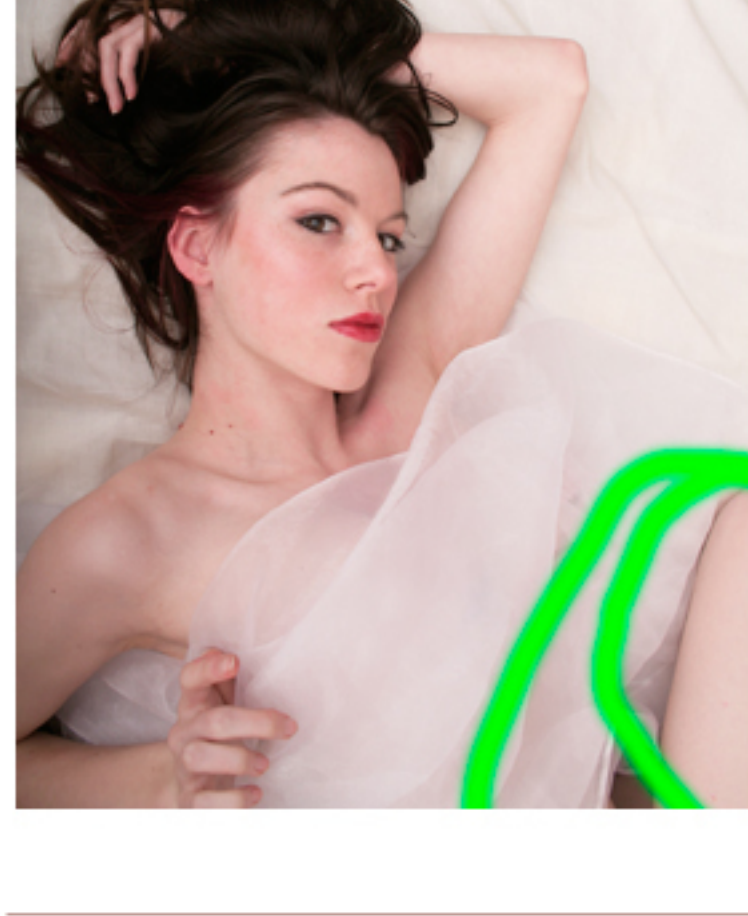Next, reduce the opacity of the brush to around 30%.

Simply click 'Alt' on your keyboard to select a good area of skin from which to clone and click over the area you want to fix. Once you are happy with the result, flatten the layers.
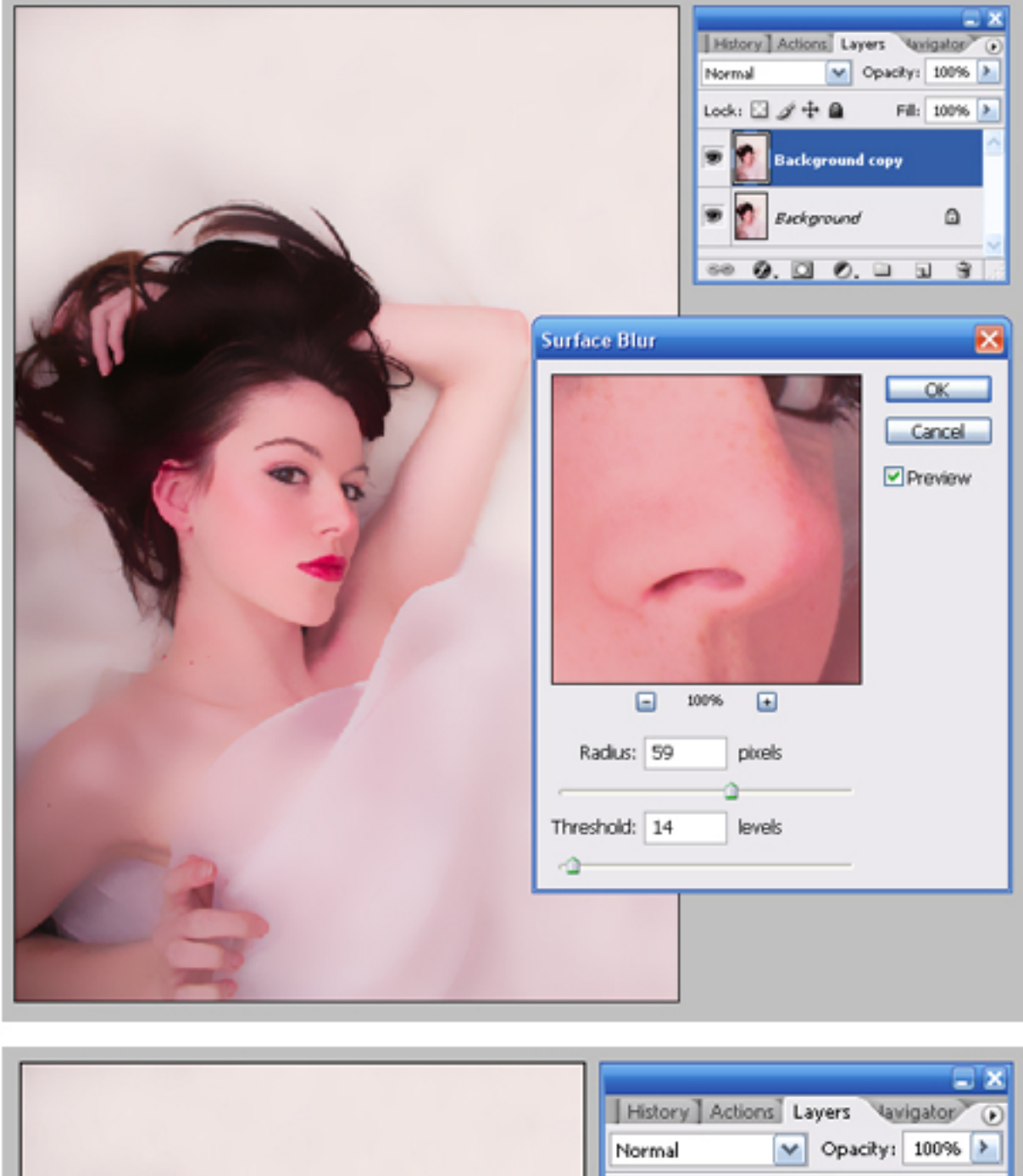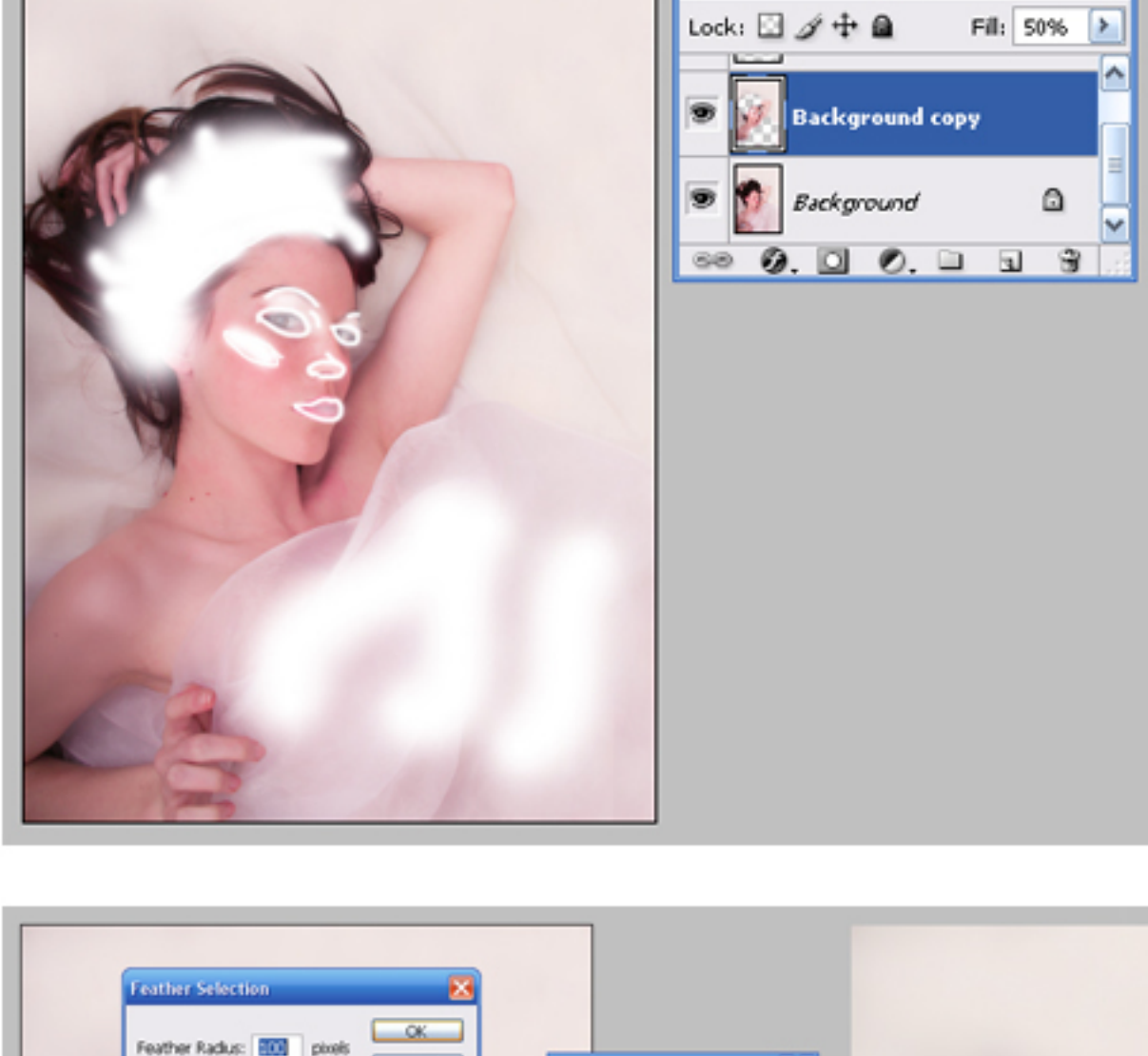
The Clone tool is also useful for fixing large areas >>
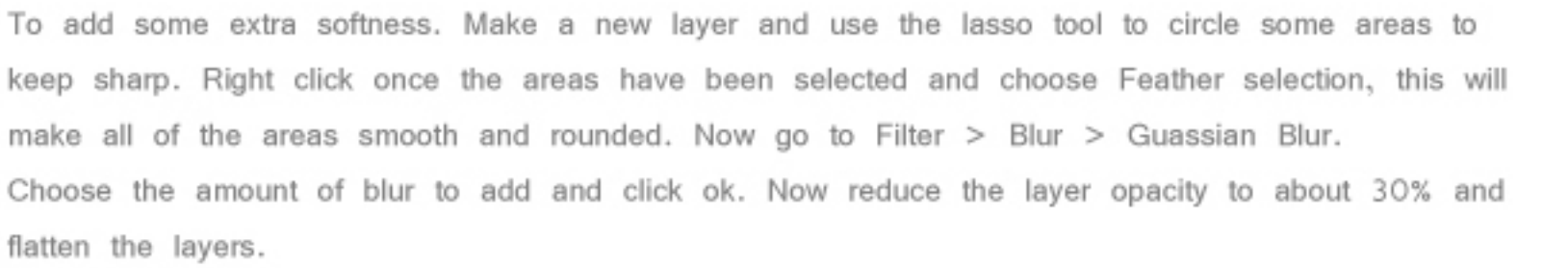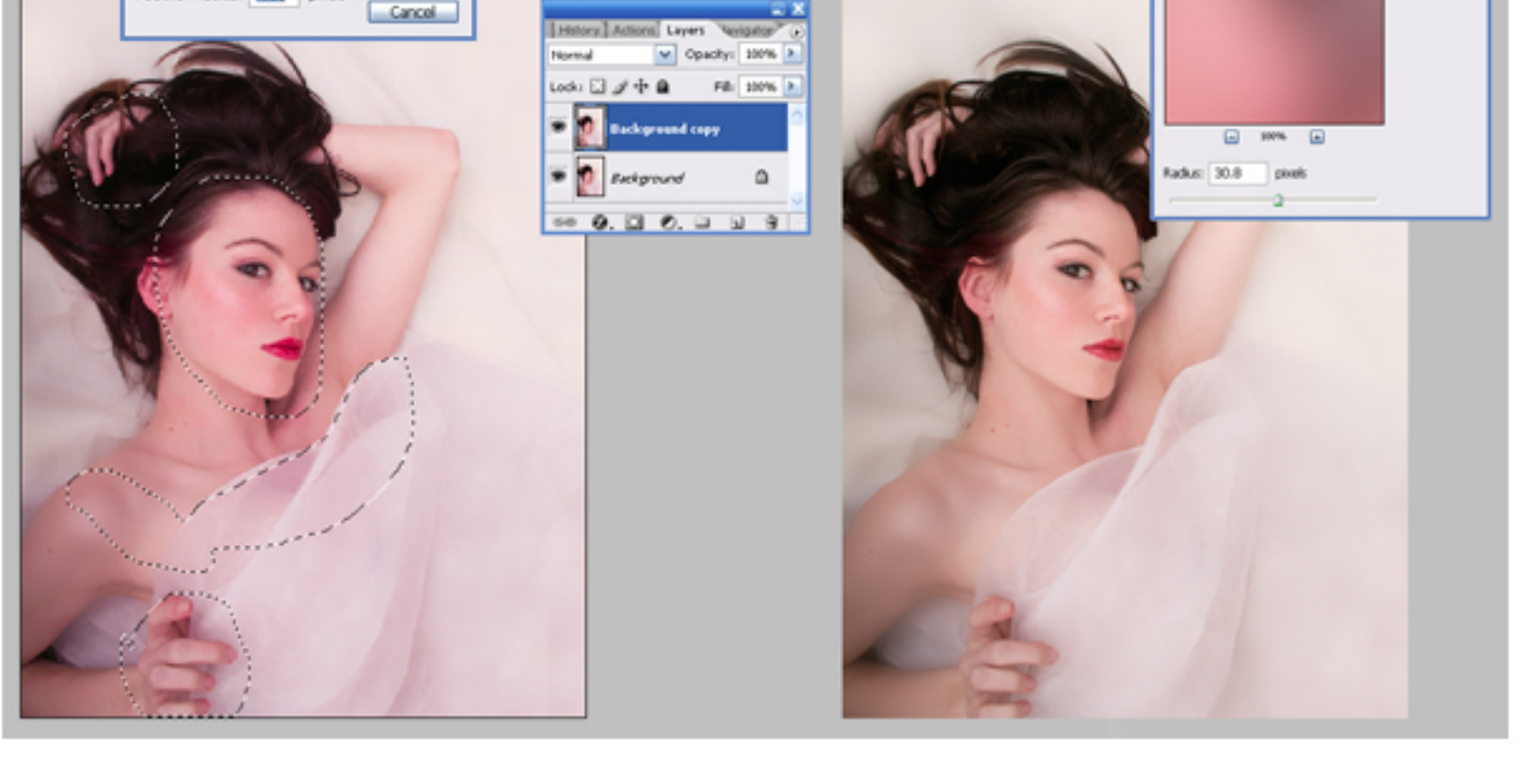
SMOOTHING AND SOFTENING

Start off by making a duplicate layer of the background.

Then go to Filter > Blur > Surface Blur. Adjust the sliders to the desired amount. Here I have used 59 and 14. Press ok and wait for it to do its magic.
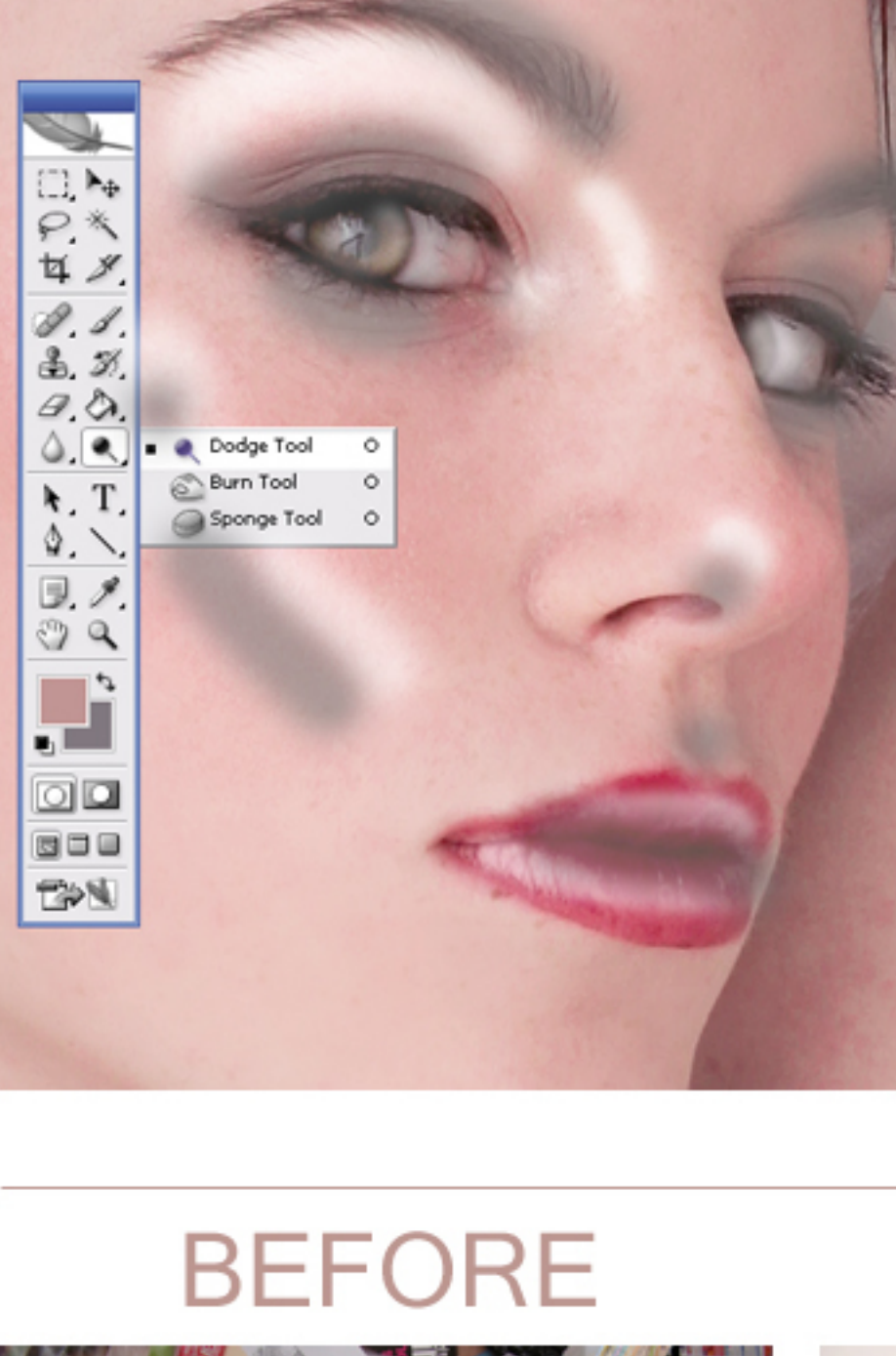
This produces a very plastic effect. So reduce the layer opacity to around 50%. This will allow some of the natural skin texture to show through.

Then, use the eraser brush (@100% opacity and 0% hardness) to go over parts of the face hair and fabric (maked in white). This will keep some textures and definition in the face. Once you have done this flatten the layers.

To add some extra softness. Make a new layer and use the lasso tool to circle some areas to keep sharp. Right click once the areas have been selected and choose Feather selection, this will make all of the areas smooth and rounded. Now go to Filter > Blur > Guassian Blur. Choose the amount of blur to add and click ok. Now reduce the layer opacity to about 30% and flatten the layers.

FINAL ADJUSTMENTS

To complete the image, select the dodge and burn tools. Using the hilight mode for the dodge brush, reduce the opacity to 2-5% and go over the areas marked in white.

To add some contrast, select the burn brush and shadow mode at about 5-7% opacity.

Go over the grey areas.

This will make the hilights pop and give the makeup some definition.

I have also added hilights to the shoulders, fabric and hair.

Finally, if the image needs some sharpening, go to Filter > Sharpen > Unsharp Mask. In the box that opens, move the sliders to amount – 60
radius – 0.6
threshold 0

BEFORE

AFTER

I hope this is helpful ! Thanks for reading.