Boosting Color using Split Toning in Lightroom

Description

Lion cub image as shot in the late afternoon in on a shady rock

There are many ways in Adobe Lightroom & Camera Raw (not to mention Photoshop) to correct or adjust the color of an image. Here I will show you how a tool you might not have used before can boost or correct color.

The Split Tone tool adds a specific color to the values defined as â€œhighlightsâ€ in the image and another to the tones defined as â€œShadowsâ€. It is easiest to see how it works when it is applied to a black and white image. Split Toning gives a sepia or tinted effect and adds interest even to the extent of adding opposite tones to the highlights and shadows. Applied to a full color image it can correct color casts or intensify color.

This lion cub image has great qualities, but is lackluster in the color.

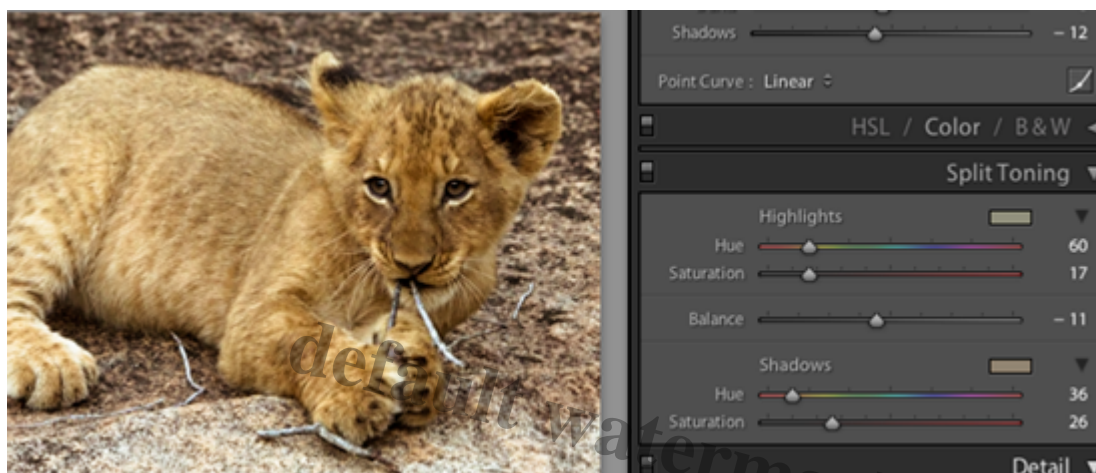Image after curves adjustment for contrast and a white balance adjustment

First things first. I have made adjustments to sliders to bring out proper balance in the midtones, shadows, and highlights. To do this I used a combination of the sliders in the Basic Panel and under the Curves. I also added a touch of Clarity, but not too much now: I can always add more later. As for color, it does pop a little more with the added contrast. I moved the Temperature slider under White Balance to add a bit of warmth and to bring out the yellow and orange tones.

Image with Split Tone adjustment

In the Split Tone tool I selected a light yellow orange color for the Highlights and a more burnt orange tone for the shadows. In choosing these colors I was thinking what tones the darks and lights of the lion's fur should be. I used the Balance and saturation sliders to adjust to my liking. The tool takes all the light tones and applies the chosen color tempered by the Saturation value. Balance changes the definition of what is light vs dark.

The Split-Tone tool settings

The final treatment would be a bit of sharpening and some dodge and burning of the eyes.

These settings also make a good sepia black and white. To see, leave everything and push down the Saturation Slider in the Basics panel to remove all color leaving only the tones from the Split Tone tool.

a monochrome version with tinting from the split tone tool

Category

1. Creating Photo Stories
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1. split tone black and white with safari photo

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