

# Torn Page and Ghosted Image Effect

By [Mark S. Johnson](#) | September 25th, 2009 | [Design](#), [Layer Effects](#), [Text Tutorials](#), [Tutorials](#)

*This technique is written for Photoshop CS4, but can easily be accomplished in prior versions.*

In today's tutorial, we'll explore a technique that simulates the look of tearing away part of an image to reveal a hidden message below. To add intrigue, we'll ghost the very same image behind the message.

## Step 1: Open an Image

Open an image of something you find interesting.

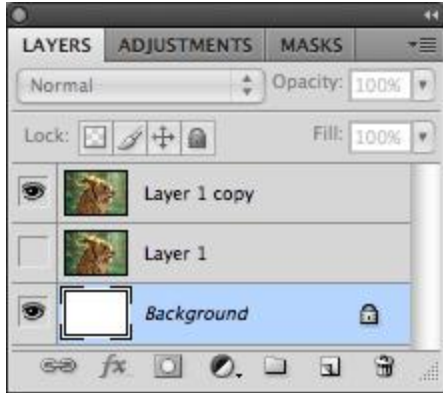


## Step 2: Duplicate the Background Layer Twice

Press Command-J (PC: Control-J) twice to create two duplicates of Background layer. For now, turn off visibility of the middle layer (Layer 1).

## Step 3: Fill the Original Background with White

Activate the original Background layer and press "D" to set the default foreground and background colors. Press Command-Delete (PC: Control-Backspace) to fill with white.



#### Step 4: Create a Torn Area

Activate the top layer (Layer 1 copy). Choose the Lasso tool and draw a sloppy rectangular selection over part of the image. Press Delete (PC: Backspace) to eliminate the pixels. Choose Select>Deselect.



#### Step 5: Refine the Top Edge Shape

Use the Lasso tool to create another sloppy selection—this time only encompassing the top edge of the torn region. Try not to follow the shape of the original edge too closely.



Press Command-J (PC: Control-J) to float the selection onto its own layer.

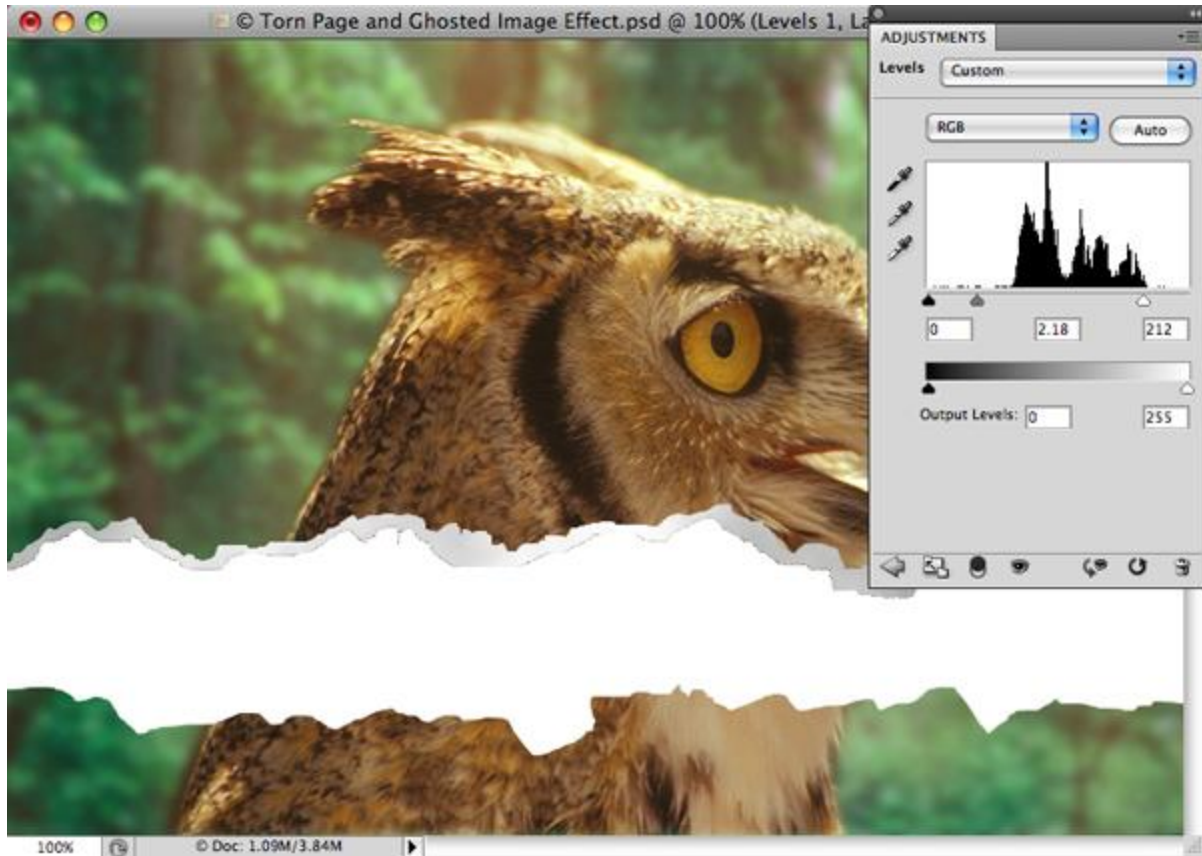
**Step 6: Change the Top Edge Attributes**

In the Layers panel, change the Blend mode to Dissolve. This adds a small amount of coarseness. Command click Layer 2's thumbnail to load the pixels as a selection. Now choose Filter>Render>Clouds.



**Step 7: Run Levels on the Top Edge**

With the marching ants still in place, add a Levels adjustment layer. Drag the midtone and highlight Input sliders left to drive the torn edge closer to pale gray and white.



### **Step 8: Add Noise to the Top Edge**

Activate Layer 2. To give the torn edge a more authentic look, choose Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Set the Distribution to Uniform, check the Monochromatic box, and move the Amount slider until the edge displays coarseness. Press OK.



### Step 9: Add a Drop Shadow to the Top Edge

To add depth to the torn region, click on the Add a layer style icon at the base of the Layers panel. Choose Drop Shadow. Set the Angle value to 90 degrees and experiment with the other sliders until the shadow looks accurate. Press OK.



### Step 10: Repeat Steps 5 – 8 for the Bottom Edge

Activate Layer 1 copy and repeat Steps 5 – 8, focusing this time on the bottom edge. Since the

light source is coming from the top in this example, the bottom edge should not exhibit a drop shadow.



### Step 11: Add a Message

Activate Layer 1 (the hidden layer) and choose the Horizontal Type tool. Add a message to the white space between the torn edges. Pick a type size that forces the message to extend slightly behind the torn edges in some areas.



**Step 12: Ghost the Image**

Activate Layer 1 and turn on its visibility. Reduce the layer's opacity to ghost the image between the torn edges.



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