Single Raw Image HDR

Open the image in Photoshop Raw Processor, setup exposure for the shadows. Use Shift Click to open the image as a smart object. Rename the layer "…Shadow."

Right click the layer and select New Smart Object via Copy. Rename the new layer "…Highlight."

Right click the Highlight layer and select Edit Contents. Setup exposure for the highlights.

To insure that the images will align, do not change cropping. Notice that this procedure will insures that the layers are aligned.

Click on the lower layer (named Shadow) to make it active, hit Ctrl A and Ctrl C to copy the image to the clipboard then Ctrl D to deselect.

Activate the upper layer and put a hide all layer mask on it using Layers menu - Layer Mask – Hide All

While holding down the Alt key, click on the mask icon in the highlight layer to make it active.

With the mask active, hit Ctrl V (Paste) to copy and then Ctrl D to deselect.

As an optional step, you can paint on the mask. Black hides the Highlight layer, white reveals the Highlight layer.

Make sure the mask is activated (a line will form a box around it if it is active). Then go to Filter >- Blur > Gaussian Blur, and apply a variable amount of blur, which paradoxically will sharpen the image. This typically takes a very heavy blur.

As a final and optional step, you may want to reopen the raw processor for a layer and make further adjustments. Right click on the layer and select Edit Contents.