① This is what my drawing looks like before any shading! I paint all my base colors first (underneath my sketch layer).
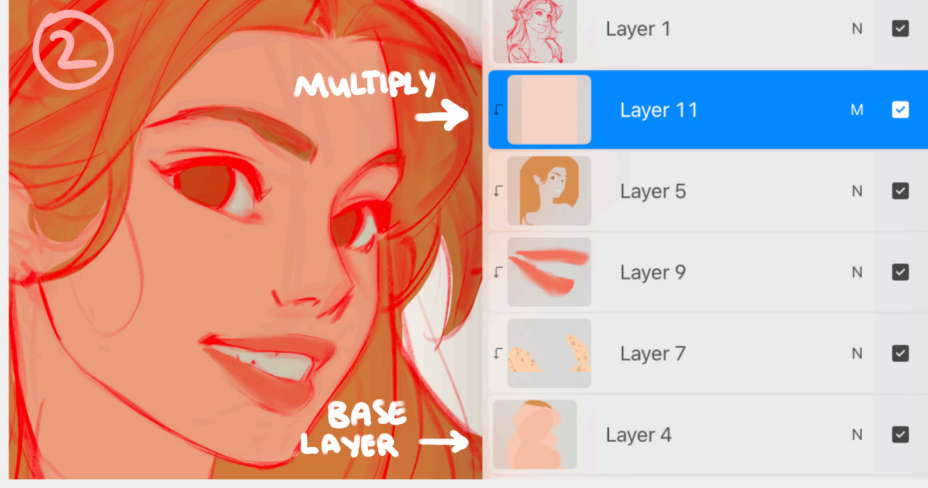
②

MULTIPLY

Layer 1
Layer 11
Layer 5
Layer 9
Layer 4

BASE LAYER

To unify the colors and make them feel richer, I'll create a multiply layer, set it to clipping mask above my base color layer, and drop a color onto the canvas. You can use any color, but I'm going for a warm palette, so I chose a cream tone.

③ Here's a good range of shadow colors to start with! I used the first one.

On that same multiply layer, I'll work on creating the primary shadows! From 3/4 view, you can narrow it down to four main areas: under the neck, under the eyebrows, under the nose, and on the side of the jaw.
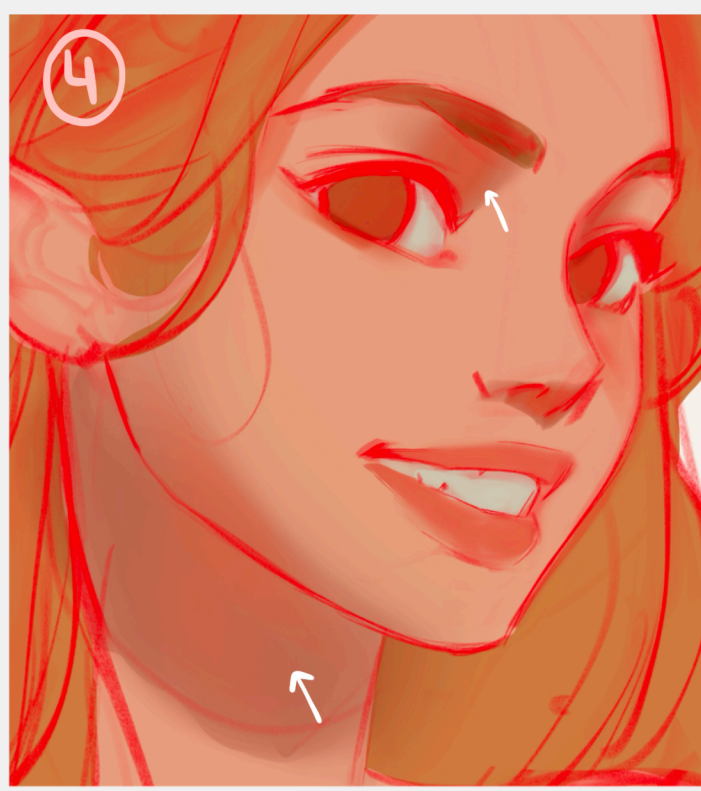
④ Still on the same multiply layer, try airbrushing some vibrant color in the middle of those shadow shapes! I used a "cadmium" red color (mix of orange and red). This can create an inner glow to the skin.
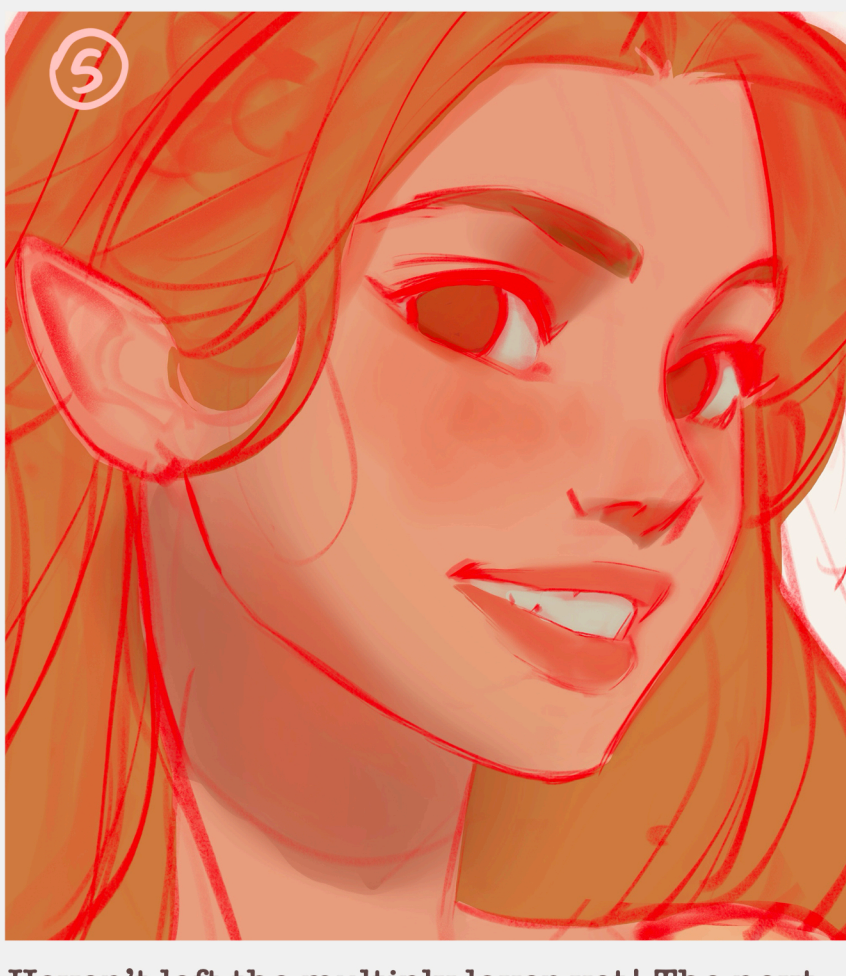
⑤ Haven't left the multiply layer yet! The next step is to add blush :) I like using a bright pinkish red and paint some splotches of color on the cheeks and a bit on the nose.
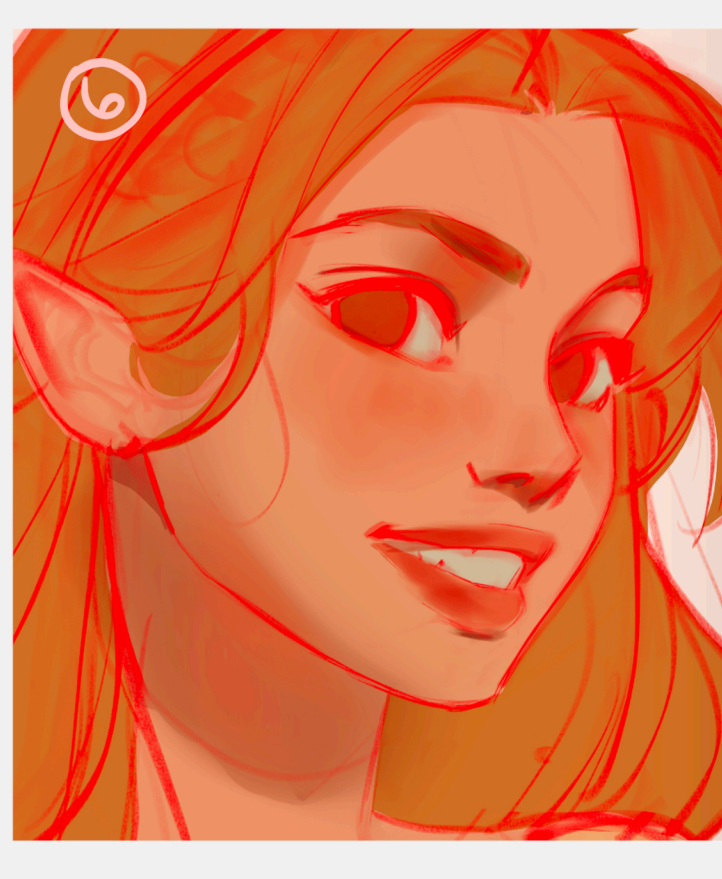
⑥ At this point, I merged my layers and adjusted them in Color Balance! I mostly adjusted the midtones to be more gold/yellow.
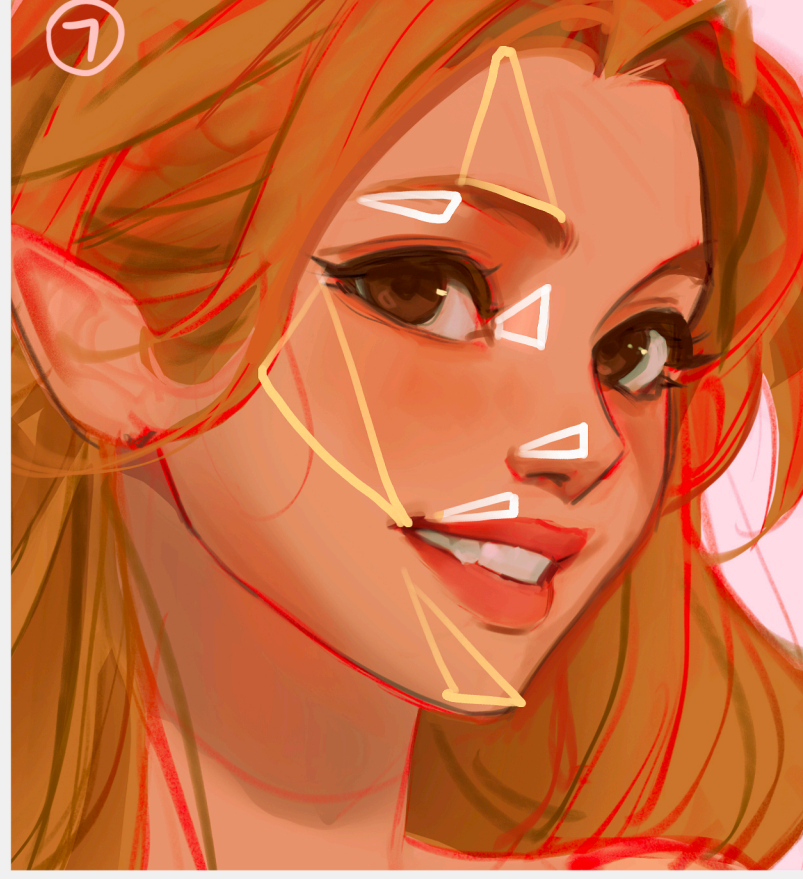
⑦ Now we're going to start adding our highlights! There are a series of triangular areas on the 3/4 view where we'll see light. If you can memorize these spots, you'll be able to highlight a 3/4 view beautifully!

Side note: it looks like I suddenly rendered the whole drawing, but I actually haven't touched the skin! I wanted to render the eyes, mouth and hair before moving on :)
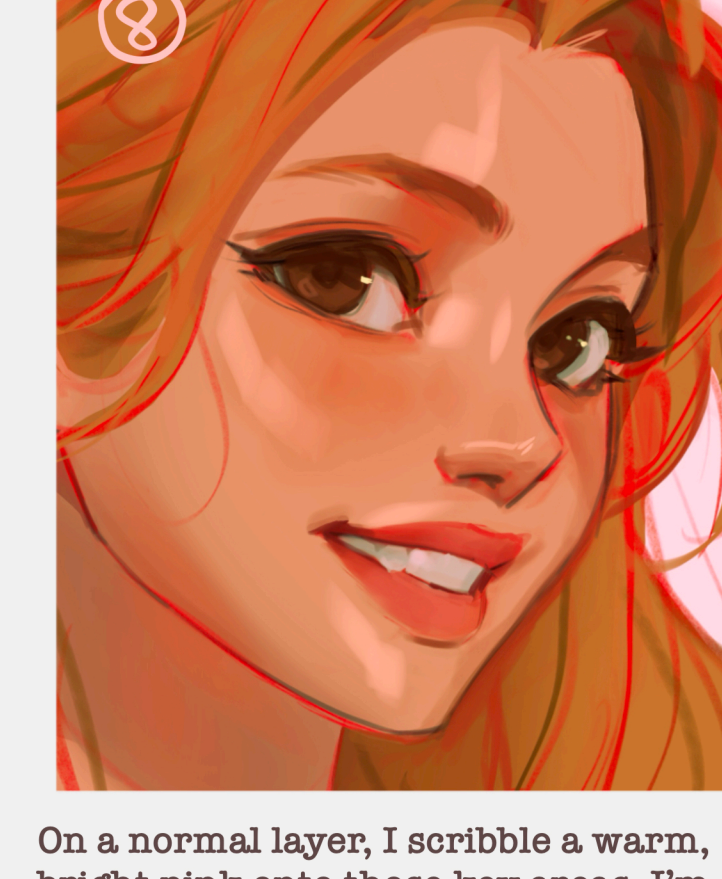
⑧ On a normal layer, I scribble a warm, bright pink onto those key areas. I'm not using white — instead, I'm using a more saturated color for my highlights! This helps maintain the warmth and richness.
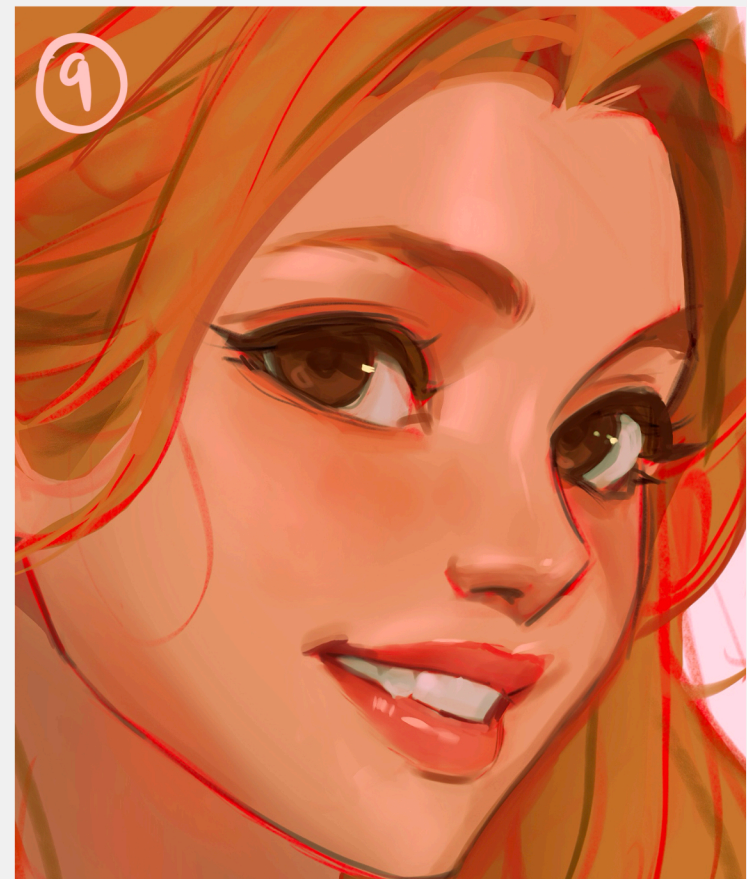
⑨ Next, blend! I used my smudge tool to smooth out the scribbles :) I didn't smooth them out too much though, because otherwise it will have an airbrushed look and I like to keep some edges and texture.

⑩

Ⓐ

Ⓑ
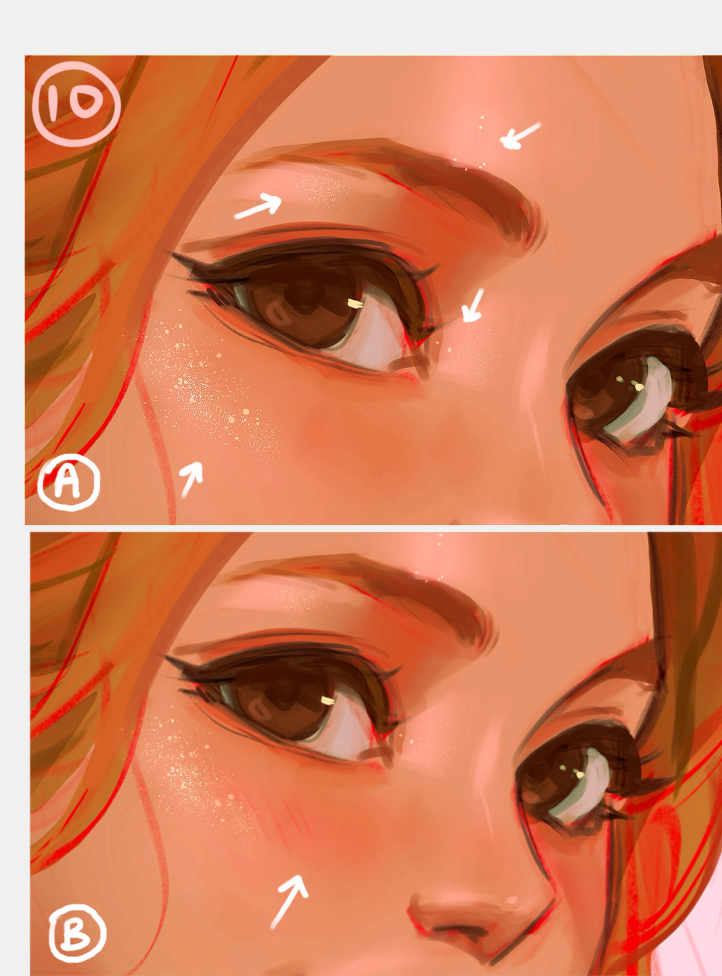
A: This step feels a little like makeup to me — I brighten the cheekbone and brow bone area with a spray brush (on a layer mode set to Add) which gives a sparkly texture. This particular spray brush is from Max Ulichney's Retro brush set! But you can also just manually paint some dots :)
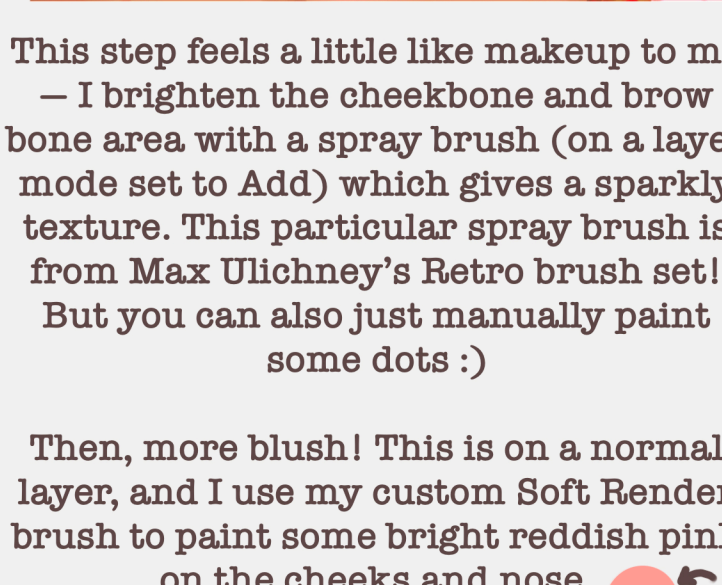
B: Then, more blush! This is on a normal layer, and I use my custom Soft Render brush to paint some bright reddish pink on the cheeks and nose.

FAV BLUSH COLOR!♥

⑪

ORIGINAL SHADOW

+
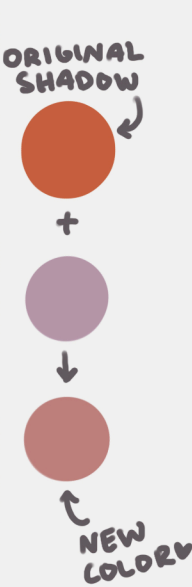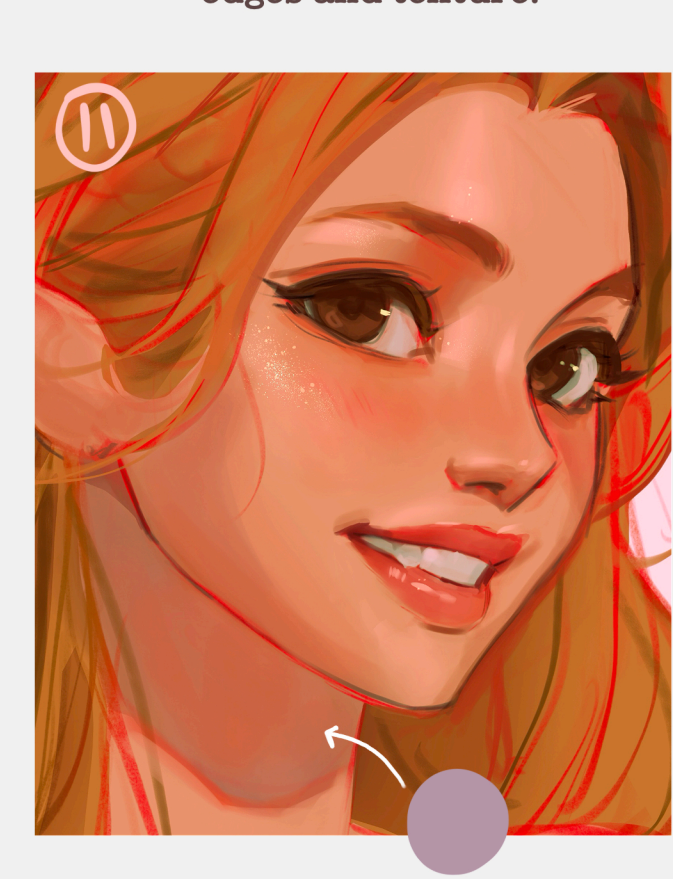
NEW COLOR!

Now time to add some cool tones to the shadows! I'll use my custom Soft Render brush (set to a lower opacity) and paint some cool lavender onto the darker shadows. The translucency of the brush will create a new cool color, which balances well with the warm skin tones!
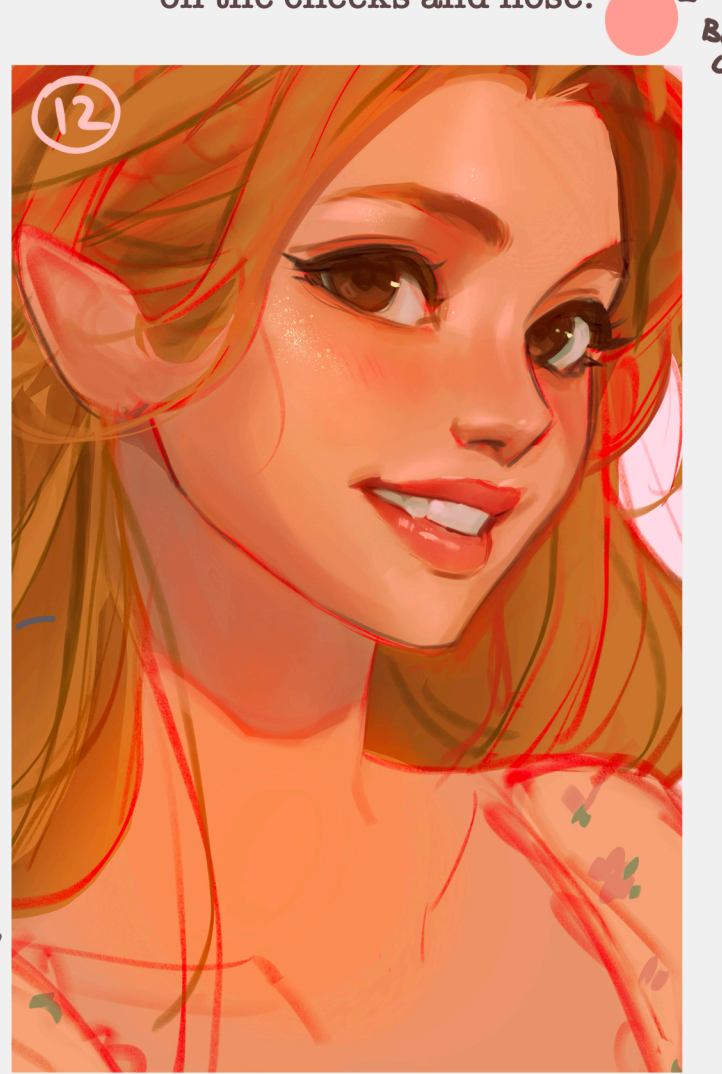
⑫ To up the contrast, let's put some super warm color right next to that cool shadow! I create a Hard Light layer and airbrush some warm orange on the neck and a little on the face.

⑬

BLEND
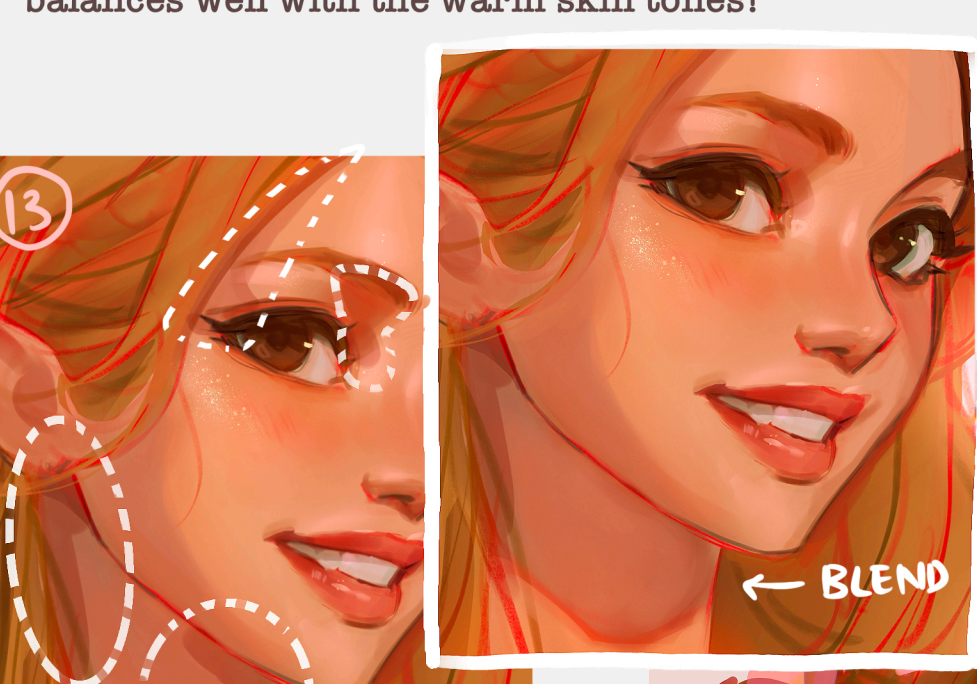
To really make things pop, deepen your shadows just a TINY bit! I do this by creating a new multiply layer and using a slightly darker color to add some subtle dark areas in corners and along edges.

DONE