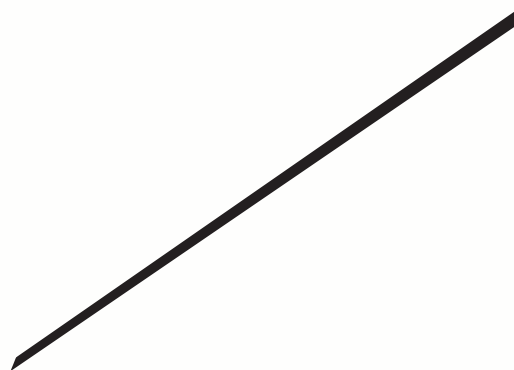


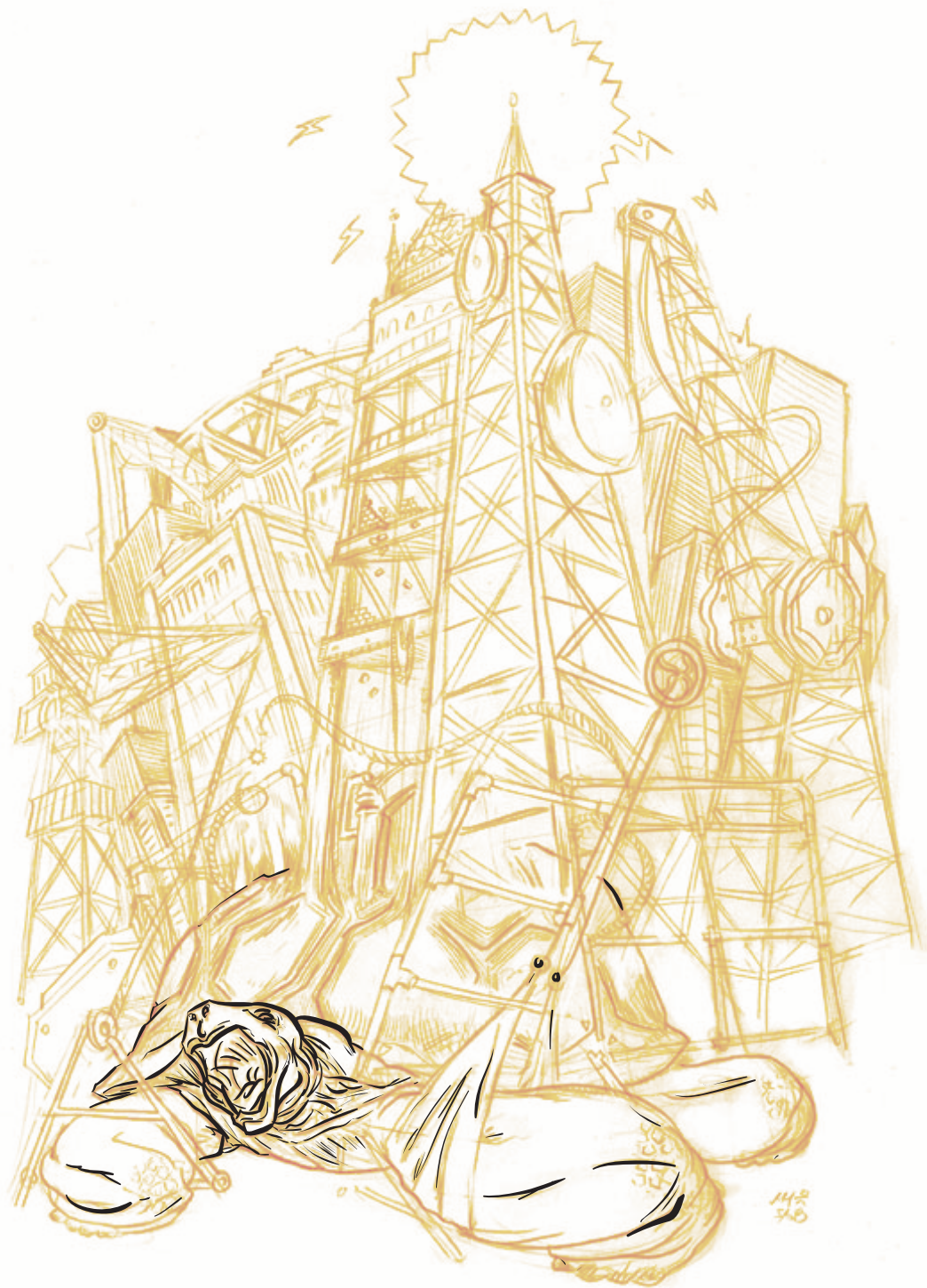


...

I start with a pencil sketch, using ordinary HB pencils on cartridge paper.

Usually, working off a thumbnail would be fine, but here I worked on A3-size paper to capture all the intricate details.



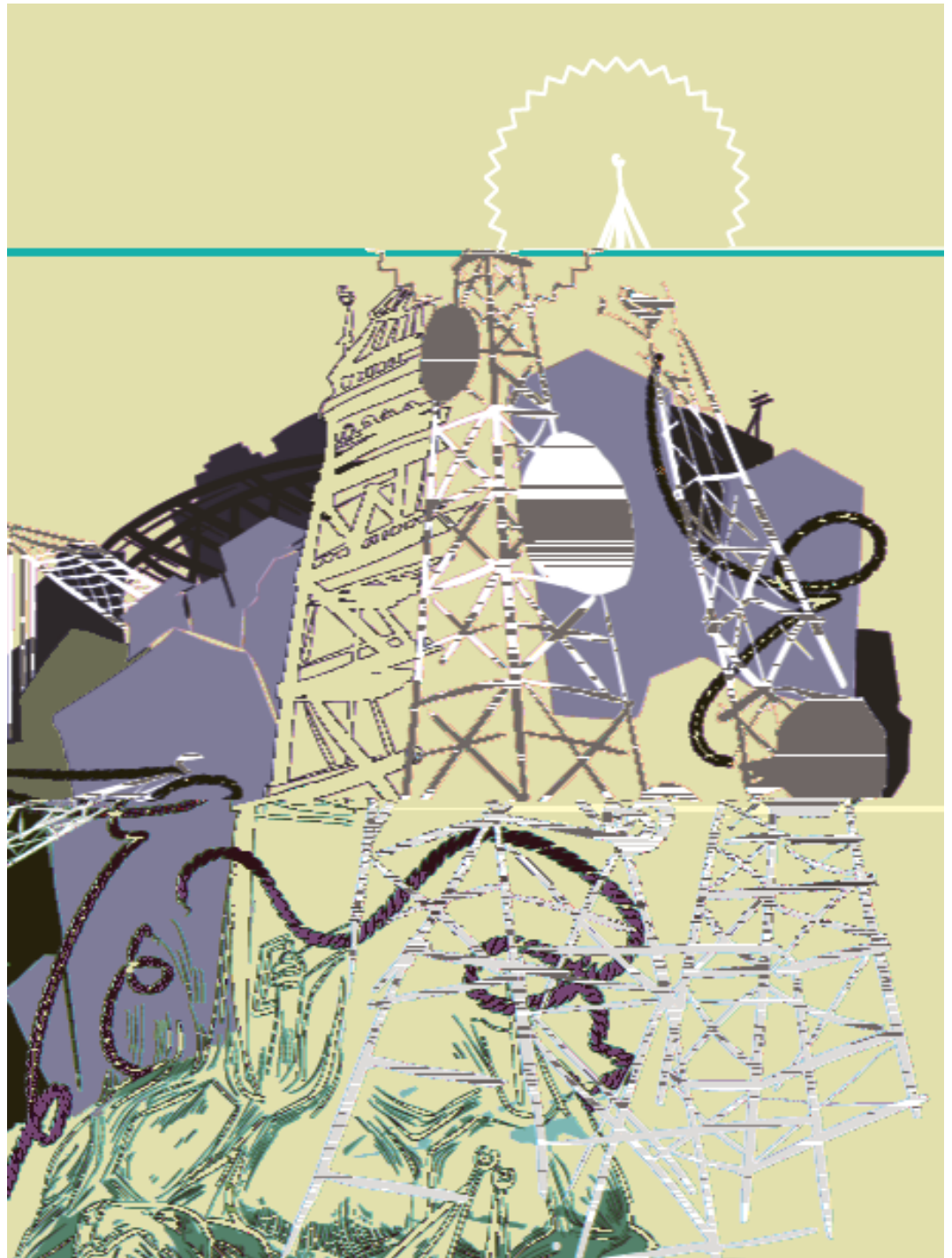


I lay in the base: flat colors and shapes. For some areas, like the turtle, I use a very broad brush with the Blob Brush tool to quickly slap down the shapes. For the angular buildings, I use the Pen tool to create harsh edges and geometric shapes.

At this stage, I'm not aiming to find the right colors or achieve any kind of finish. I'm only concerned with establishing the composition. The weight of solid shapes may throw off the balance or make an image much heavier than you'd expect from looking at just sparse line work.

The spark above the center satellite antenna is a Zig Zag effect applied to a circle shape. It's very simple, but I like taking an aggressive comic book "ka-pow!" device and draining it of its fervent energy by using restrained, perfect geometry.

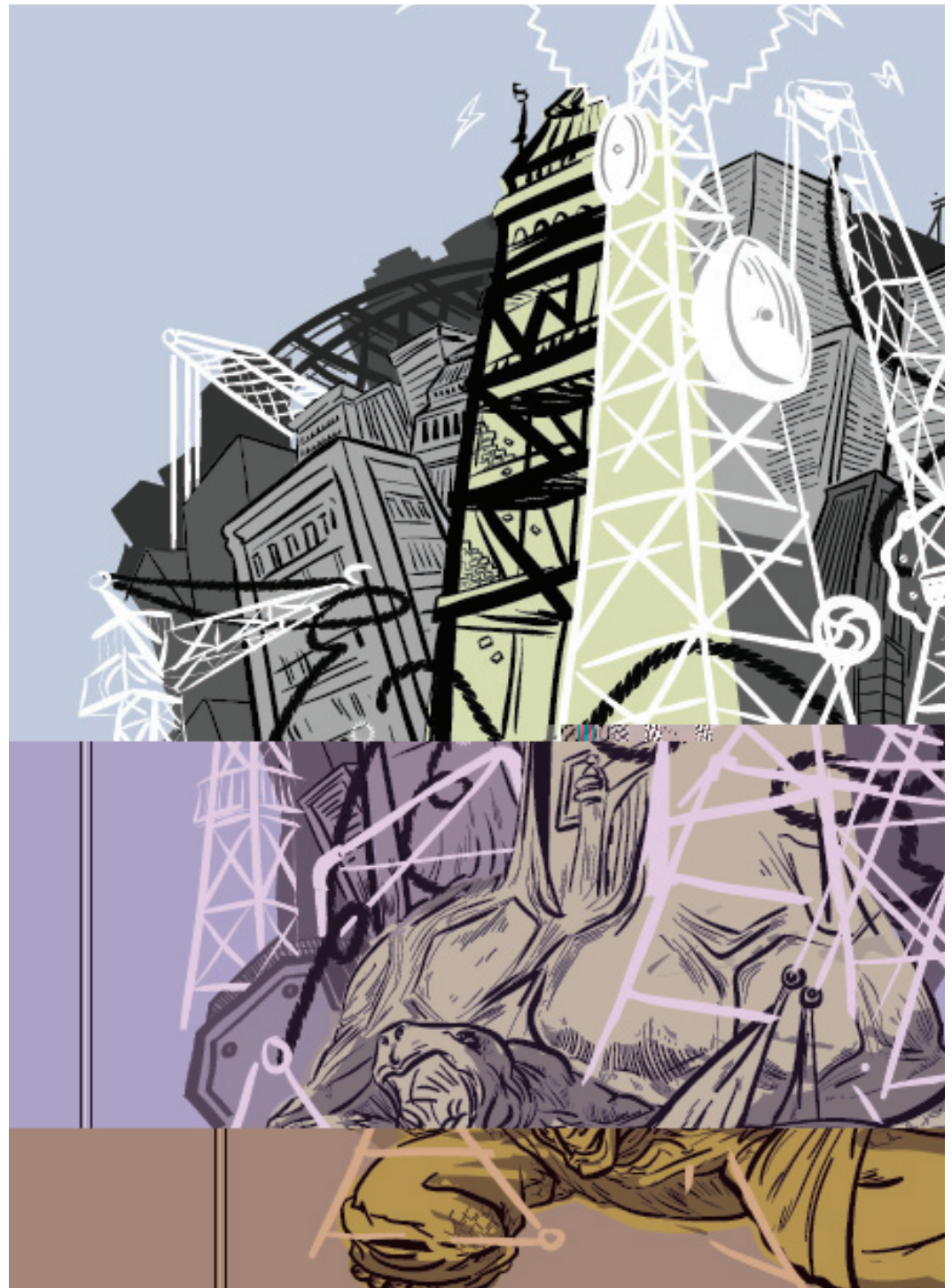
I drew a small section of a rope, perhaps three knots long, with the Blob Brush tool and turned it into a Pattern brush to achieve the pattern on the flailing ropes.



I throw in some shadows and flesh out the detailed line work in the background. It's starting to look busy, so I use contrasting colors to define adjacent elements.

I add some more details to the line work on the buildings.

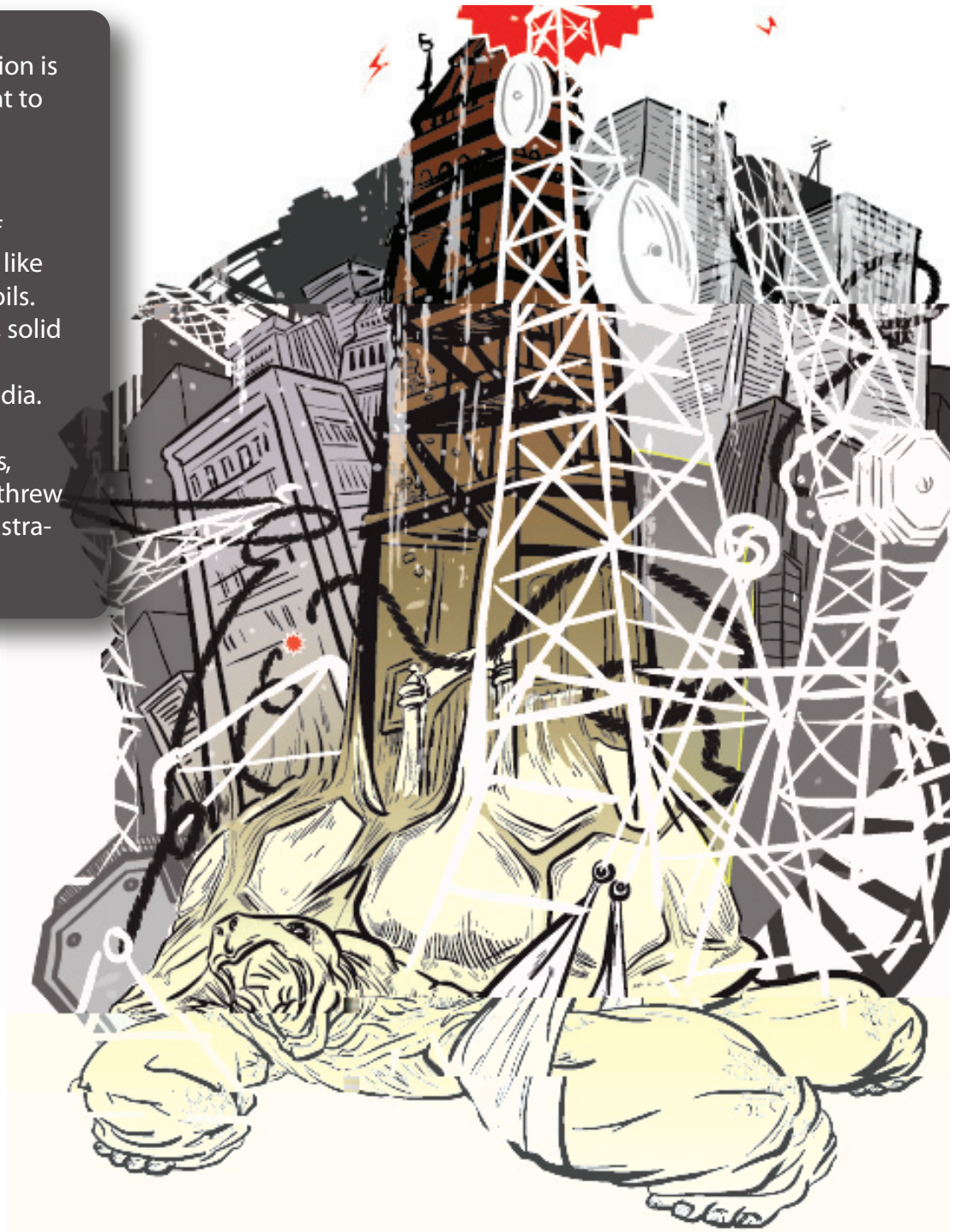
The horizontal lines of the windows are simply blends. To achieve a greater variation amongst the lines, I use the Eraser tool to randomly erase sections from the lines and dab the lines with the Warp tool.



Having put in all the basic shapes, I notice the composition is tipsy, so I add the giant gear/wheel into the bottom right to balance out the elements.

Once all the shapes are in, I start playing with the color palette. I like to showcase the inherent characteristics of whatever medium or tools I'm using. I like inks that look like inks and would never try to make watercolors look like oils. So in creating digital work, I like to use the perfectly flat, solid colors and gradients that only computers can flawlessly achieve, rather than attempting to mimic traditional media.

I used Live Trace on some brush strokes and ink splatters, turned them white, played with their transparency and threw them over the peeking skyline to give the very clean illustration some attitude.



By slapping in the line work with the Blob Brush tool, I've achieved an energy and boldness that I'm happy with. However, much of the line work is also very rough: the joins are off and there are stray lines flying in uncontrolled directions.

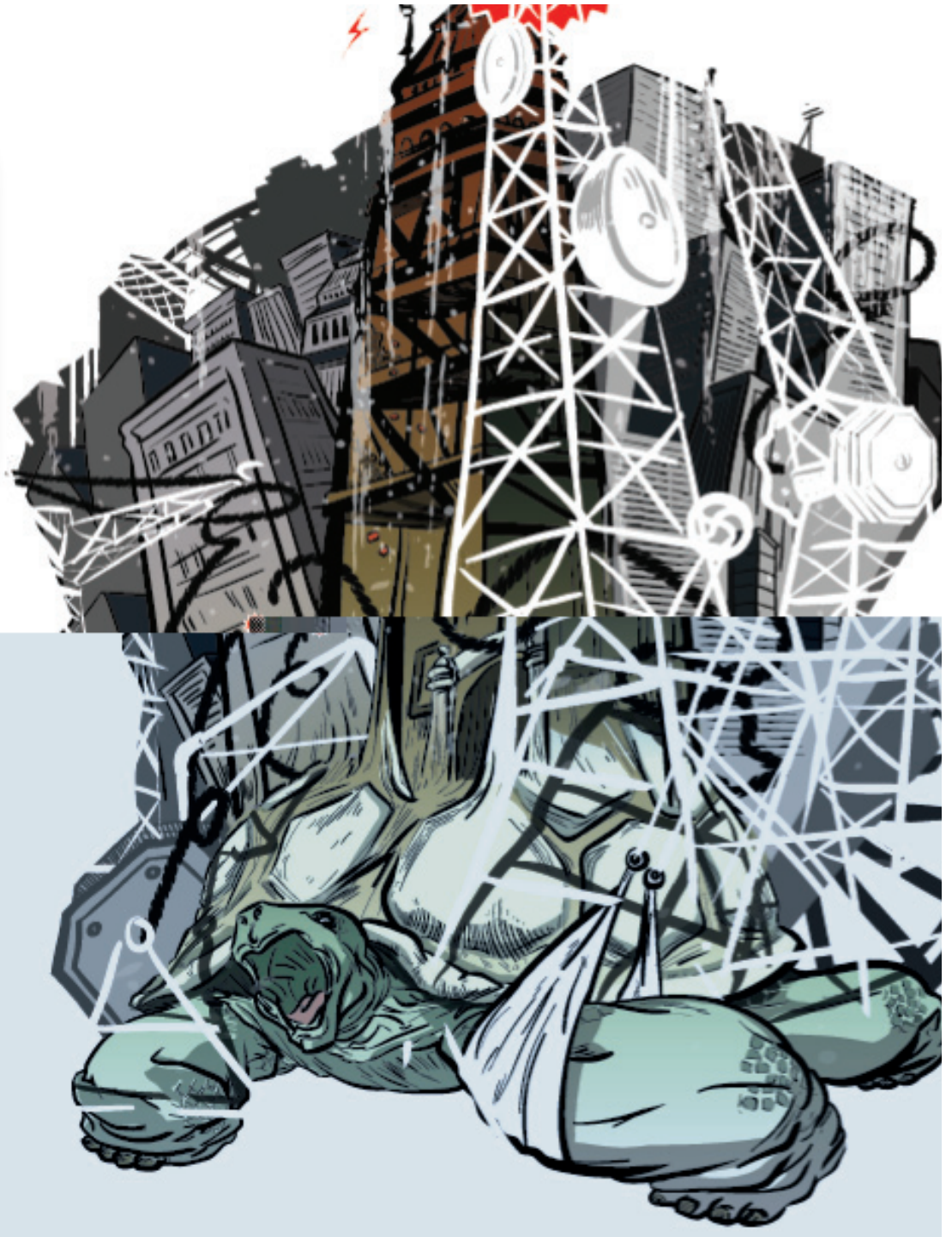
So I zoom in and clean up the line work with the Smooth tool and delete some of the excess anchor points where needed, such as on the imperfect satellite dishes.

I also use the Eraser tool to clean up some lines, especially the uneven edges around the image's tough, industrial elements.



I return to coloring to clean up the piece and add in details like shadows, highlights and finer areas of color like the toenails.

I add in shadows by applying a grayed-out version of the base color or a transparent black using the Multiply blending mode.



Finally, I use the Blob Brush tool for an authentic signature!



To see how my finished illustration looks on different types of output, I add a new artboard to my file and place my drawing on a skateboard template.



Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

Adobe, the Adobe logo, and Illustrator, are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.
© 2008 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved.