

IT'S IN THEIR EYES



Photographs in color and monochrome of Americans in masks (mostly) during the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic in Northern California.

BY

DAN RYAN

Contents copyright © Dan Ryan.

This edition copyright © 2020 Dan Ryan. All rights reserved.

Brief excerpts of this book, including the cover, may be reproduced in any form for review purposes without prior permission from the publisher.

Photographed, written, and designed by Dan Ryan

Publisher: Dan Ryan

Photographed in California in San Francisco and San Mateo counties between March and December, 2020

First electronic edition: January 2021

Introduction

2020 was, to put it restrainedly, a shitty year.

And I think at the very least we should all have a nice souvenir of it. Hence this book you're about to look through.

I live literally two and a half miles south of the city of San Francisco, and when the stay-at-home orders, mask mandates, and other restrictions went into effect in northern California in mid-March, 2020, I knew that not only would I have less legitimate time to go out into the nearby world every day to shoot photographs, the very nature of the kind of people-centric photos that I take was going to fundamentally change.

Because everyone's face would be covered up. And I had no idea how to get around that. I photograph people because their smiles, grins, frowns, grimaces, and laughter tell stories that are beautiful, hopeful, cautionary, and sad. My quest as a professional photographer is to capture the essence of human life in small, fleeting moments so that the stories in people's faces are preserved for all time.

But people's faces had changed. Well, then, logically, I thought, so had their stories.

So rather than view this as a barrier, I embraced it.

See, when someone's face is covered such that one can still see their eyes, when they smile one can really tell. They get a glint in their eyeballs that was absent the moment before, and the skin around their eye sockets crinkles in a noticeable way. It's actually kind of cute, and has a relaxing effect upon the observer. At least it has that effect on me.

So that's what this book is, my attempt for most of 2020 to capture the smiles, the altered stories, in people's faces as they went about their otherwise normal, mundane lives during the course of an out-of-control viral pandemic.

I photographed people in bodegas and supermarkets, on the street and in public parks, at #BlackLivesMatter protests, and in the big city San Francisco and a few smaller towns south of it on the peninsula. Basically, wherever my virus-limited life took me in 2020 during the course of this ongoing pandemic, I shot photos of people in their various emotional states.

So I hope you enjoy this lovingly-conceived and executed souvenir of a rather shitty, but at times very hopeful and human, year.

---Dan Ryan
Brisbane, California
January 2021



Burdened by many things.
Brisbane, California, March 2020



Running away from it.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Happy Easter from Covidtown.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



Her lovely yellows.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



Showbiz in the sunshine.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



You gotta make some kitty time.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Magic and a unicorn hairband.
Brisbane, California, April 2020

He's on the front lines of coronavirus testing.
South San Francisco, California, April 2020





Red satin in the produce section.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Beautiful blue in virus time.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



A lady, her wife, and their dog.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Waiting for the dinosaur time.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Superb color coordination.
South San Francisco, California, May 2020



Camo and hard seltzer may just save this day.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Virus time in suburbia.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



She said she was Tupac's widow, and I had no reason to doubt her.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



Family outing, with parasol.
Brisbane, California, May 2020

Keeping Japantown clean.
San Francisco, California, May 2020





He held his arms up to the sky like a god of minor importance.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



He had beautiful eyes but a ragged brassiere.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



She attends to her darling pup.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



A rose bandana in virus time.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



A shock of red hair like a mushroom cloud of freedom.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



A family in transit.
Daly City, California, May 2020



He was a very colorful kid.
San Francisco, California, May 2020

Everything she wore said 'spring' like a wolf howling in
tall green grass.
Brisbane, California, May 2020





A chicken delivering chicks and I guess
that kind of makes sense.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Somebody's got to deliver the drinks.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



In memory of Kim Andrews Carter.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



Waiting for the bus like the most tired man in the whole world.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



The mariachi's amazing sport coat.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



She called him “grandpa” and he’s 90 years old.
South San Francisco, California, June 2020



In front of the restaurant,
and by the way #BlackLivesMatter.
Brisbane, California, June 2020

When I was this young I was never this hip.
San Francisco, California, June 2020





The Pink Force is strong with these two.
Brisbane, California, June 2020



Selling fresh strawberries at a small farmers market.
Brisbane, California, June 2020



The man in camouflage smiled with his eyes.
South San Francisco, California, July 2020



All-American Latinx family.
Daly City, California, July 2020



She was great, but her fluffy dog didn't like me.
Daly City, California, July 2020

He was just a nice guy and a Niners fan.
Brisbane, California, July 2020





The dog looked comfortable and imperious.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



The most beautiful dress in the whole park.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



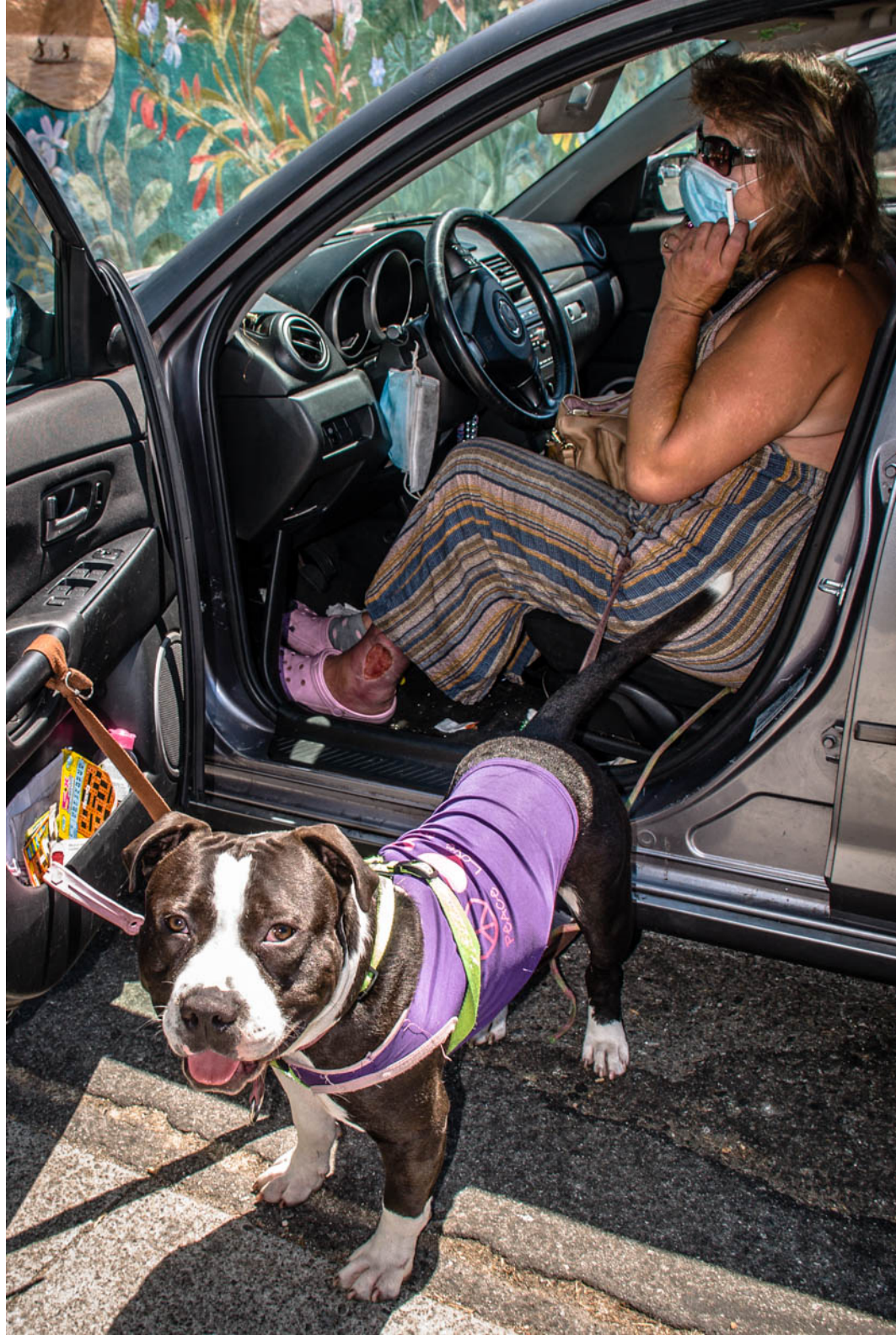
Shapes in drapes of pink.
Brisbane, California, July 2020



Sometimes a mere hat can say the most noble thing.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



Two friends on a street corner along Sunnydale Avenue.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



The pup would've worn a mask if she had asked him to.
Brisbane, California, July 2020



They reminded me of the Psychedelic Furs song.
Brisbane, California, July 2020



He was about as coherent and assembled as his mask.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



Small-town construction crew.
Brisbane, California, July 2020



Beautiful eyes and a rhinestone mask.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



Miss D and her dog Mister do a little grocery shopping.
San Francisco, California, July 2020

The guest of the birthday party.
Brisbane, California, July 2020





Peeling off the mask, which one sometimes has to do.
Brisbane, California, July 2020



The princess of her fifteenth birthday.
Brisbane, California, August 2020



Even in a pandemic, you've got to promote your brand.
(Also, note the pigeon.)
San Francisco, California, August 2020

In the best sense of the word, he was a perfect geek.
Brisbane, California, August 2020





The scooter darlings.
San Francisco, California, August 2020



Her hair alone was beautiful enough for angels.
South San Francisco, California, August 2020



Two strangers share a moment on the street.
San Francisco, California, September 2020



"My love she comes in colors, you can tell her from the clothes she wears." --Arthur Lee
San Francisco, California, September 2020



We must and let's America.
Brisbane, California, September 2020

Sometimes all a kid needs is fuzzy ears, a unicorn jacket, and popcorn.
Brisbane, California, September 2020





A cheerful girl along El Camino Real.
South San Francisco, California, September 2020

The belle of the outdoor party.
Brisbane, California, September 2020





Her fluffy pup and Minnie Mouse.
Colma, California, October 2020

The Blue Pajama Kid.
San Francisco, California, October 2020





Ramen fashionista.
San Francisco, California, November 2020

Hoodie like a blue window to the soul.
Brisbane, California, November 2020





Her tie-die ensemble was smashing.
San Francisco, California, November 2020



A fuzzy pink kid and her friends.
Brisbane, California, December 2020



You can't go wrong at the supermarket is superior jammies.
San Francisco, California, December 2020

Dad and his beautiful child on a sunny afternoon.
Brisbane, California, December 2020





A fierce mask on Christmas Eve.
San Bruno, California, December 2020



After this is all over,
we'll still have bridezilla.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



A ghoul and her dog.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Happy family in virus time.
San Francisco, California, March 2020



The man needed his Newports.
Daly City, California, March 2020



Greetings from the gas station.
Daly City, California, March 2020



We are not stealing souls at the pharmacy.
South San Francisco, California, March 2020



A moment of peace in the parking lot.
Brisbane, California, March 2020



Guidelines for everyone.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



A peace sign for us all.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



The fine point of a grocery clerk.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



In these crazy times, you got to love a baby beagle.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Hey, the Fett needs snacks.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



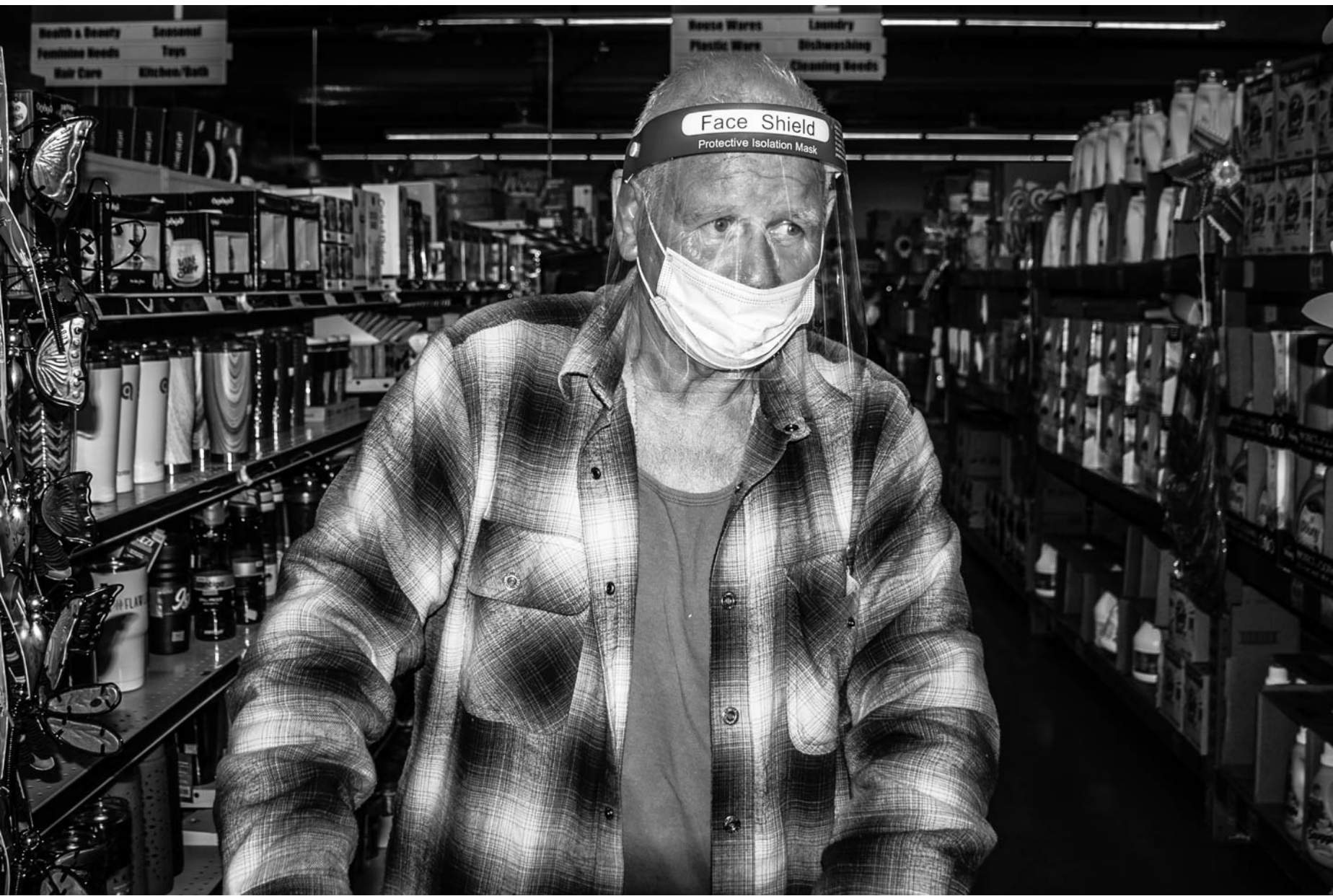
Guarding a balance of darkness and light.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



Well there's your #coronavirus album cover right there.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



He told me his bear snout glows in the dark.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



It says what it is, and it is what it says.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



Cuddly in the check-out line.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



Getting by on a sunny day.
South San Francisco, California, April 2020



I forgot to keep my social distance.
Brisbane, California, April 2020



Her wonderful hair, part 1.
San Francisco, California, April 2020

Her wonderful hair, part 2.
San Francisco, California, April 2020





Probably not NASA-approved.
Brisbane, California, April 2020

These kids know the score, yes they do.
San Francisco, California, April 2020





He's with mom, and it's alright.
San Francisco, California, April 2020



He said it's called a gaiter.
South San Francisco, California, May 2020



The ad hoc mask can't hide the wry smile.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Sensible kids.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Sometimes a fellow needs a smoke.
Daly City, California, May 2020



Tattoos in the morning sun.
Daly City, California, May 2020



She runs an intrepid donut shop.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Walking the kid on Page Street.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



PRIVATE PROPERTY
UNAUTHORIZED
WILL BE TOWED
AT OWNERS'
C.V.C. SEC.
FOR TOWED VEHICLE
COURTESY TOW
BRISBANE P.D.

PARK ONE
MINIMUM
FINE \$

NOTICE
NO LOITERING
OPEN ALCOHOL
CONTAINERS

One of Brisbane, California's finest.
May 2020



Running a snake in the sewer of life.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Find the kitty.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



The kitty likes to ride with her.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



That look of wonder on a child's face. Sort of.
Brisbane, California, May 2020



Awaiting something or someone unknown.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



Getting through it, just somehow getting through it.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



She didn't mind being photographed one little bit.
San Francisco, California, May 2020



A friend of mine and his dog.
Brisbane, California, May 2020

Pop and The Kid are pleased to meet you.
Brisbane, California, May 2020





The ever-vigilant stroller baby.
San Francisco, California, May 2020

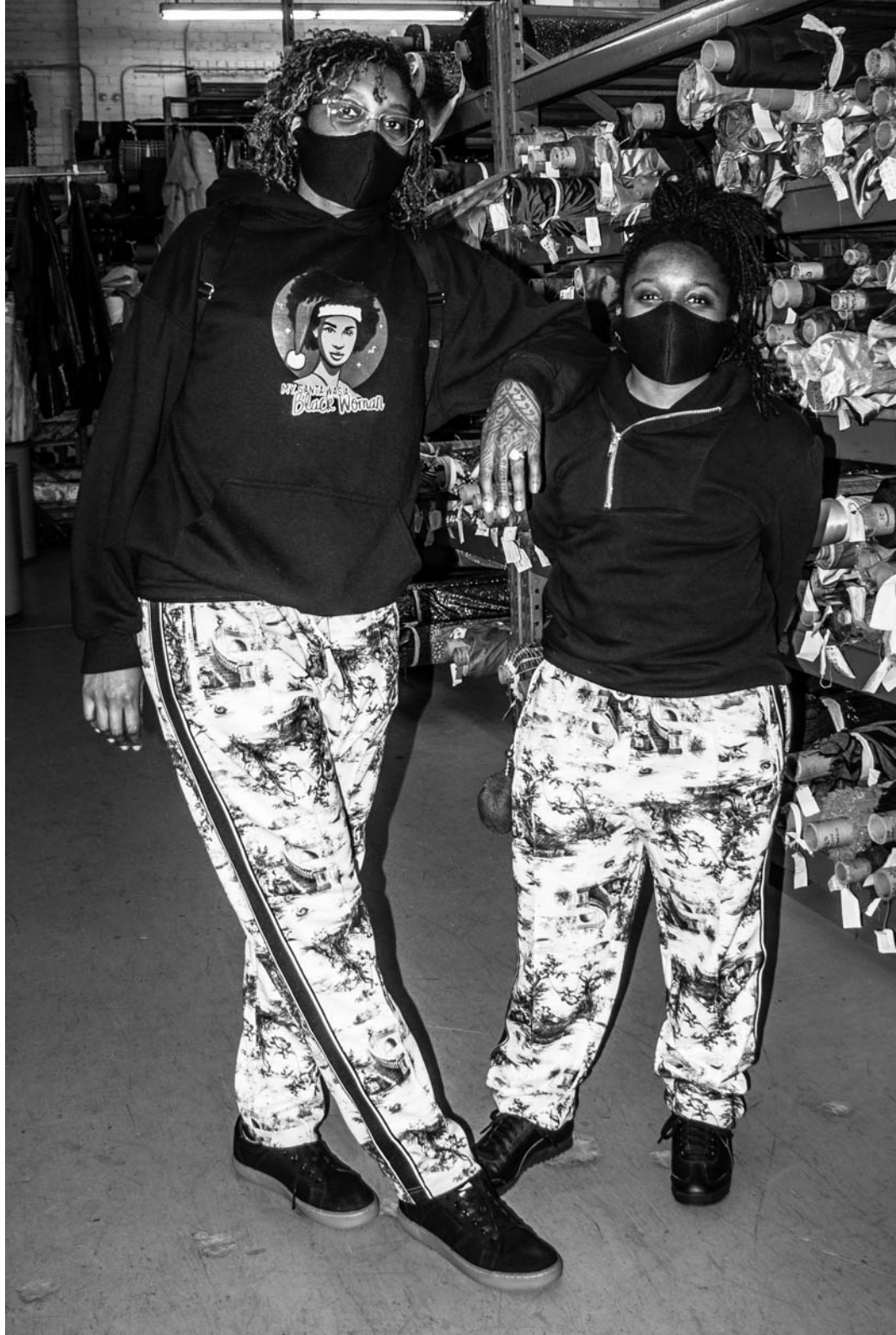
The flag isn't something he merely wears on his sleeve.
Brisbane, California, May 2020





The kids in America.
Brisbane, California, May 2020

Ladies in matching pants at the fabric store.
San Francisco, California, May 2020





Asking for coins, and it's just another day.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



He was in some kind of pain but he didn't say why.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



Get your masks at the mask superstore on Mission Street.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



Like a spaceman wearing a galactic video helmet.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



It's a lie, but he's wearing a mask. But it's a lie. Uh, right.
South San Francisco, California, June 2020



I spent mere moments with this man, but he made my life better.
South San Francisco, California, June 2020



Just a nice man on a sunny day in a parking lot.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



The beard is an entity of its own.
Brisbane, California, June 2020



A cocktail of required social distance.
Brisbane, California, June 2020

I was honest with him, I said I loved that he was in a suit
at the grocery store.
San Francisco, California, June 2020





I liked her jacket, and the scene was just interesting to me.
Brisbane, California, June 2020



It was the beard, I really loved the beard.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



His natty style was pure 1965.
San Francisco, California, June 2020



He was taking a break from skateboarding.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



He was selling sportswear on Hayes Street.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



A man from Ethiopia on Alamo Square.
San Francisco, California, July 2020



About to photograph beers from a small local brewery.
Brisbane, California, July 2020

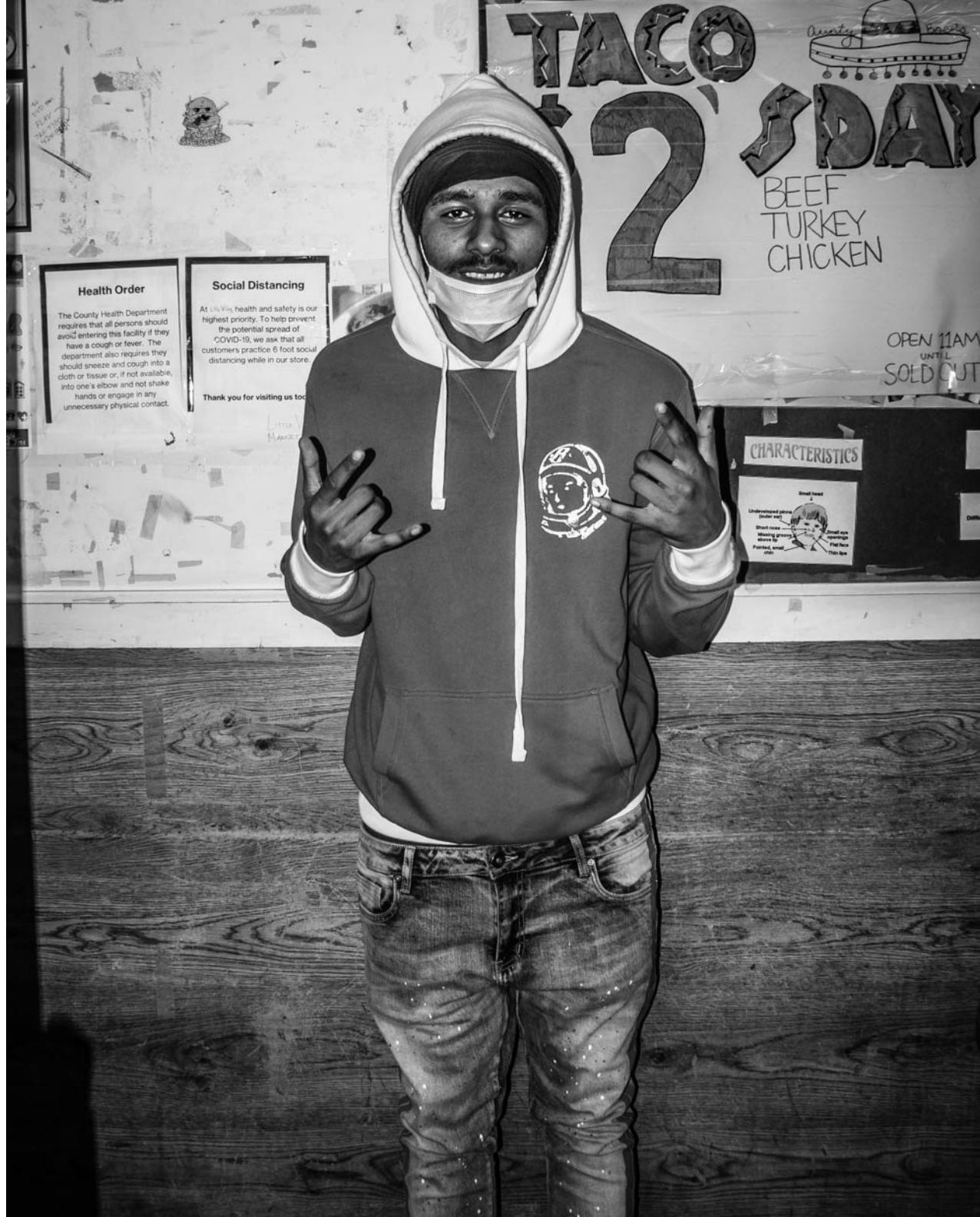


The last time I photographed this man he was wearing a Boba Fett mask.
(See page 88)
Brisbane, California, July 2020



In order to get the dog's attention.
Brisbane, California, July 2020

We are all smiling and happy when
there is need of us to be so.
San Francisco, California, July 2020





Enter or don't, the sidewalk is indifferent.
San Francisco, California, July 2020

A kid, her dog, and pops.
Brisbane, California, July 2020





Upon a garage roof, where the fog could not thwart his efforts.
Brisbane, California, August 2020



Just a Christian sister waiting in line at the bank.
Daly City, California, August 2020



Teenaged construction boys.
Brisbane, California, August 2020

It was good, the chrome helmet upon his head.
San Francisco, California, August 2020





Supermarket transportation.
San Francisco, California, September 2020



A stunning smile is the megaphone way.
South San Francisco, California, September 2020



Speaking in that thing we all have in our mouths.
South San Francisco, California, September 2020



I think I got their point.
San Francisco, California, September 2020



Mom and babe at the supermarket.
San Francisco, California, October 2020



Shopping cart as social-distancing tool.
Colma, California, October 2020

The old 'normal' isn't coming back.

This is how we live now.

Wear a mask.

Be kind to each other.

One day all our smiles will once again light up the world.

IT'S IN THEIR EYES



Photographs in color and monochrome of Americans in masks (mostly) during the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic in Northern California.

BY
DAN RYAN