

On his own

He claims that he cannot tell his fans apart. French, American, Vietnamese—all people defined by their adoration for him.

He says they laugh and cry at the same moments. With a flutter of his fingers, he reaches in and pulls out the same sigh. He sees the onlookers, the gigglers and sighers, the criers—all from behind the shadow of a hand.

His hand, with all its particulars. Each line, bulge, and groove—defined. They tell the story of a man. This man.

The fingerprints are proof he is only a man.

But he wanted the universal. He wanted commonality across people. He said he searched for truth. But what if that was just him?

What if all people were not the same? Only he was the same. From France to America to Vietnam. He had not found the formula for the end of suffering. No formula to cook up empathy and understanding. He had only found a formula for himself to follow.