

CHARACTER, MUSIC & MEMORY

CURSE OF THE JNCOs

Doug's Playlist



FRANK QUESTIONMARK

Critical essay | Curatorial copy | Screenwriting

Sound as a doorway into a father's haunted past

Based on Production Draft 4: Grief Time Machine Pass

01 / CRITICAL ESSAY

The sound of wanting before

Original essay exploring the project's relationship between music, memory, and grief.

The most frightening promise in *The Curse of the JNCOs* is also its most comforting: you can stay. Doug does not discover a doorway into the past because he wants to abandon his daughters. He discovers it because he misses his best friend. The danger begins where an ordinary wish becomes an offer. One more laugh. One more room in which nobody has died. One more chance to be the person he was before grief changed the shape of his life.

That is why music belongs beside this story. A song can make time feel briefly negotiable. The first few seconds may summon a car, a friend, a room, or a version of ourselves that no longer exists. We do not need to understand that response before it happens. Recognition arrives ahead of explanation. In the screenplay, Doug hears a teenage laugh and feels relief before fear. The playlists can work at that same threshold: the listener recognizes an emotional world before knowing what that world wants.

The jeans are a physical container for this temptation. Their exaggerated silhouette carries a period association, but their narrative function reaches beyond fashion. They are something Doug can touch, unfold, and put on. Memory becomes wearable. The costume offers him an earlier self while quietly narrowing his access to the present. What appears to restore a friendship begins to erase the relationships still asking something of him.

Doug's Playlist offers an entrance into that contradiction. The listener can approach the story through the emotional pressure of its central character: a father who wants to recover a friendship but must recognize the cost of trying to live inside it. The playlist need not explain the plot in sequence. Its stronger opportunity is to make the plot's emotional mechanism felt. Music can create the sense of being called back before the writing reveals what returning would take away.

A useful playlist does more than assemble an atmosphere. It asks the audience to inhabit a particular kind of attention. Do we listen for comfort, or for the fault inside it? Do we recognize the past, or allow the past to recognize us? These questions give the music a relationship to the writing. The playlist becomes a threshold into the story rather than a decorative object placed beside it.

02 / CRITICAL ESSAY CONTINUED

The present needs a voice

How the story shifts from private nostalgia to a shared, imperfect now.

Production Draft 4 sharpens the horror by keeping Tommy human. He is not an obvious monster with a false face. He offers the absence of hospitals, funerals, and forgetting. That offer is persuasive because its ingredients are real losses. If the film treated him only as a villain, Doug's attachment would become a mistake to correct. Keeping him warm makes the attachment something Doug must understand and carry differently.

Music can preserve that ambiguity. Warmth should not automatically mean safety; abrasion should not automatically mean evil. A comforting passage may become troubling because of what surrounds it. A harsh passage may articulate an honest feeling that the Archive's soothing language refuses to acknowledge. The important distinction is emotional truth. Doug needs room to miss Tommy without surrendering the rest of his life to that missing.

The Archive introduces a competing voice. It reports that the subject is safe even as the family has evidence of danger. Its authority is procedural: a case file, a match, a status. Doug's grief is reduced to something the system appears able to identify and manage. The horror lies in the mismatch between that tidy declaration and the untidy reality of a father losing contact with his daughters.

The twins answer with language that is almost painfully simple. "This is now." "Today counts." Their drawing does not offer a better-looking past or an explanation of the supernatural. It offers a relationship. The family is together, today, and that fact deserves Doug's attention. Against an interface that claims certainty, the children provide the imperfect but immediate evidence of love.

For me, that is the listening arc worth writing toward: recognition, invitation, disorientation, resistance, and return. These are proposed curatorial movements, not a claim about this playlist's current running order. They describe how musical contrast could support the screenplay's choices. The final movement should leave space for sorrow. Doug says goodbye; he does not announce that grief has been solved.

The ending makes that distinction concrete. He burns the jeans and keeps the VHS tape without playing it. Memory remains part of his life, but access to memory is no longer an emergency. A playlist can hold the same tension. We may return to an earlier sound without asking it to replace the people beside us. The past can be heard. The present still needs an answer.

03 / FILM-FACING PLAYLIST

They still fit. So does the ache.

Proposed audience-facing copy and curatorial rationale for the *Curse of the JNCOs*: Doug's Playlist.

PLAYLIST DESCRIPTION

Some clothes remember who you were. Some songs make you believe you can get back there. Enter the emotional world of *The Curse of the JNCOs*: friendship preserved in fragments, a familiar house becoming strange, and a father learning that remembering someone is different from following them. Listen for the pull of before. Keep one foot in now.

CURATORIAL APPROACH

The film-facing playlist should meet the audience at Doug's level. Its first responsibility is emotional recognition: the sense that a sound could belong to a life he once had. Period texture can help, but nostalgia should remain specific to the relationship rather than becoming a catalogue of fashionable references. The listener should feel why Doug reaches for the jeans before being asked to fear that choice.

From there, contrast can suggest the house's transformation. A familiar musical gesture returning in an altered context can echo the duplicated bottle caps or the changing photographs. A shift in density can suggest a hallway becoming too long. These are relationships between musical experience and dramatic experience; they do not require pretending that any particular track has already been selected as a film cue.

The middle movement should keep desire and alarm close together. Doug is not simply being chased. He is being invited. The playlist's promotional language therefore benefits from questions and incomplete promises rather than constant declarations of terror. The emotional hook is the cost of accepting something that initially feels like relief.

The closing movement belongs to the family. The twins' voices give the film its moral direction, and the playlist can make space for that turn through a change in pressure, intimacy, or pace. Return should feel earned. Doug comes back with grief still present, but with a clearer understanding of what his daughters need from him.

[LISTEN: Curse of the JNCOs: Doug's Playlist →](#)

04 / SCREENWRITING ADAPTATION

Today counts

A new condensed scene adapted from Production Draft 4, written for this portfolio sample.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The room is almost familiar. The cabinets. The refrigerator. The drawing held against it by a crooked magnet.

Beyond Doug, the denim stretches into a dark corridor. Its folds offer the depth the house should not have.

A teenage laugh travels through it. Doug turns toward the sound.

TWIN 1

Look at me. This is now.

Her hands close around his. The other twin pulls the drawing from the refrigerator and presses it into his palm.

Three figures in crayon. One sun. No one missing.

TWIN 2

Today counts, Dad.

Doug looks at the paper. Then at the dark.

DOUG

Tommy... I miss you.

The pull eases. Only for a moment.

DOUG

That's why this hurts.

He holds the drawing tighter.

DOUG

But hurting isn't the same as going back.

The corridor shudders. For the first time, Doug does not look into it.

DOUG

I'm your dad.

He moves toward the girls. The impossible depth folds in on itself, becoming seams, hems, ordinary denim.

They fall together onto the kitchen floor. Doug gathers them close. The drawing is crushed between their hands.

A small rustle. Doug looks at the jeans.

DOUG

Get the matches.

05 / LISTENING & CREDITS

Continue into the world

Project links, authorship, and the scope of this writing sample.

LISTENING LINKS

Curse of the JNCOs: Doug's Playlist

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/26ZKjiVsTLhmhthaa5P8nL>

Twinkles Archive

<https://twinkles-archive.replit.app>

Frank Questionmark

<https://frankquestionmark.com>

Writing & creative portfolio

<https://thefrankportfolio.org>

AUTHORSHIP & SOURCE NOTE

Writing presented under Frank Questionmark. This portfolio edition includes a critical essay, proposed playlist descriptions, curatorial interpretation, a condensed screenwriting adaptation. The adapted scene was created for this sample; they are not represented as unchanged passages from the source screenplay.

Story grounding: *The Curse of the JNCOs - Production Draft 4*, *Grief Time Machine Pass* and the *Draft 4 Revision Blueprint*. Key source elements include the breathing denim, duplicated bottle caps, the Archive's false safety report, Tommy's invitation, the twins' drawing, and Doug's decision to burn the jeans while keeping the VHS tape.

Spotify verified the playlist title, creator (Frank Questionmark), and linked playlist identity on September 29, 2026. Its current track list and running order were not exposed by the retrieval tools for this edition. Musical movements described here are proposed editorial interpretations, not verified track-by-track analysis. No song lyrics are reproduced, and no music licensing or film-soundtrack placement is claimed.

Design: Spotify-inspired dark surfaces, green accents, and a verified playlist title; independently designed portfolio document.

Cover image: AI-generated concept still developed from *Draft 4*; fictional casting, not a production photograph. PDF listening links open Spotify. Interactive playlist players belong on the website and do not play inside this document.

PORTFOLIO DESCRIPTION

A character-focused writing sample exploring *Curse of the JNCOs: Doug's Playlist* through grief, nostalgia, and the pull of the past. Includes an original critical essay, proposed playlist copy, curatorial notes, and a screenplay adaptation about a father choosing his daughters and the present.