**The K’s, Jacaranda** - live review (478 words)

Pockets of conversation washed down with pints - the traditional patter of a good Friday night. Something about The K’s entrance to the stage steals attention in a second. Four bandits with guitars and a room full of forgotten syllables. From the first note, they own the crowd and, as they roll out to chants of “The K’s are on fire,” it’d be hard to believe they don’t know it.

For an acoustic show, ‘Chancer’ has never sounded so full-bodied. Watching The K’s play is like watching one organism at work; as synchronised as your next breath with strings that share a heart. It’s a performance that gives new life to this song, which now seems so supple in such a small space. In delicately woven guitar, a gentle comradery is formed: “I’m reunited with my friends, they won’t believe how I’m claiming my night ends.”

‘Hoping Maybe’ is introduced by a reimagined ‘Girls Just Wanna Have Fun.’ It’s light and shimmery - in other words, its successor’s bubble-gum opposite. The latter track is smooth, emotionally rich, the guitar solo at the end pulsing through the walls. It’s a smart pairing, bursting the bubble-gum with cymbals that cry “I’ve missed you all my life, I just never realised it ‘til tonight.”

Before two new tracks take to the spotlight, a voice rises from somewhere in the room chanting “Dexter, Dexter.” Boyle smiles as the joke grows on his lips: “Sounds like your dad made it then Dex.” With house lights down and a ceiling that’s meters away, voices remain anonymous, and often out of context. Arbitrary shouts of “October 8th” were met by confused faces and Breslin jibing, “Someone’s clearly predicted me birthday… I’ll expect a present.” One organism, four teasing minds.

Like birds listening carefully to each other’s song, we sway through ‘Circles’ and ‘Lights Go Down’, holding on to every unfamiliar note. A tender and tactical preview of their debut album chased by the latest single. “It’s Friday night fuck it let’s start the party,” Boyle shrugs. From ‘Black and Blue’ through to ‘Hometown’, energy elevates until you’d swear you could levitate. Almost-empty pint glasses are held up like trophies and lyrics gain a whirling choral backing. It’s joyous.

Another wickedly divine pairing closes the show as The Pogue’s ‘Dirty Old Town’ melts into ‘Sarajevo.’ It’s the past roaring into the present, unbridled and feverish. Every voice gets just a little bit louder and every bounce gets just a little bit harsher. Now more so than any other moment tonight, we’re part of the organism too.

The set ends on a request - ‘Valley One’. Stillness on the water. Breslin creates ripples of piano while Boyle pushes tidal vocals to the back of the room. It’s so considered, so elegantly controlled. If The K’s were on fire, we’ll all be blowing embers on the way home.