

The voice belonged to Mr Flick.

Mr Flick was the manager of the Lizard Street cinema, known as Flick's Ritz. He wore a black suit with velvet lapels, black bow tie, shiny leather shoes and a green waistcoat with big brass buttons.

Mr Flick was just opening the cinema. Outside were photographs of the forthcoming film: men on horseback, holding shields and lances.

'Looks very exciting,' Corky said. 'Who wrote it?'

Mr Flick looked round – to make sure Mr Lace wasn't near by – before replying, 'Shakespeare.'

'I love Shakespeare,' Ruskin cried. 'One day I'm going to be the greatest actor in the world. I'm going to stand on stage and do exciting things and the audience will watch me, holding their breath and biting their nails.'

'You wanted to play the part of hero in the school play, didn't you?' asked Mr Flick.

'Yes,' Ruskin replied, looking at the cracked pavement, 'but I didn't get it.'

'Who got it then?' asked Mr Flick.

'Elvis,' Ruskin told him. 'The class thought he looked more like a hero because he's tall and got muscles.'

'Oh, things like that don't matter to an actor,' Mr Flick said. 'I've seen some plays and thought the actors were as tall as a lamp post, but when I've seen them in real

life, they've been shorter than me. It's what a person *does* that makes him tall, it has nothing to do with height or muscles.'

Corky smiled and said, 'Exactly, Mr Flick.' Then he looked at Ruskin. 'Come on, my dear boy. Time for our tea and biscuits.'

'Can we see the film sometime?' asked Ruskin.

'Of course,' Corky said. 'I'd enjoy that very much.'

