

MARQUEE

by J.T. YURKO

Vice Versa



VICE VERSA (PG - Columbia) Starring Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage. ★★

Does the world really need another body-switching film? After all, no one can do it better than Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin did in "All of Me" (1984). And Dudley Moore and Kirk Cameron already tried in last year's "Like Father Like Son." But the newest such film, "Vice Versa," turns out to be as funny as it is predictable.

Like "Like Father Like Son," "Vice Versa" presents a father (Judge Reinhold) who switches bodies and lifestyles with his son (Fred Savage), a precocious 11-year-old. The father, Marshall, thinks he has it tough. As the buyer for a big-city department store, he's under constant pressure. His career has cost him his marriage and may-

be the love of his son, as business keeps him away from his son's school plays or their scheduled weekends together.

But on a trip to the Far East, Marshall acquires a vessel used for reincarnation by the Tibetans (who seem to have cornered the market on spirit-switching devices — remember the guru in "All of Me"?). A few choice words and some ghostly special effects and presto! change-o! Marshall is attending his son's math class and getting beat up by the schoolyard bully.

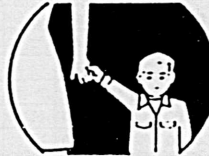
The son, of course, is now in the body of a 35-year-old man. This makes for some embarrassing moments in the boardroom, not to

mention on dates with older women. You can see the gags coming: the "son" reading The Wall Street Journal on his way to school, for instance, while the "father" spends all his time in the toy section of the department store.

Surprisingly, though, "Vice Versa" is a very funny film. Predictable? Sure. Implausible? No, impossible — start to question the premise, and you may want to sneak out of this film and into the one playing in the theater next door. But taken as a parable for good intentions — arrange a switch so the father can understand the son, and vice versa — the film is well-intentioned, good-natured fun.

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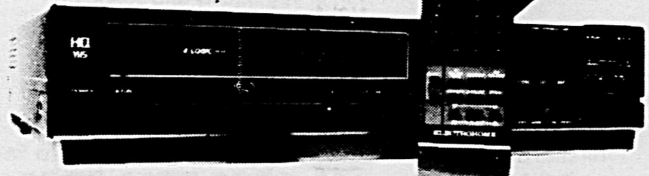


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