*[random bits of unintelligible speech]*

( *fuzzy audio crackling fades into synth video game music* )

Robotic voice: Welcome to the Retroist.

Host ( *soft, light piano chords in background* ): I made a lot of bad bets with my friends

as a kid. Things like, can you pick this lock? Can you beat this video game? One of the ones I regret most is, can you solve this Rubik’s Cube?

The stakes were high. This is when we were really getting into our commodore machines, and we bet a box of floppy disks. When I made this bet, I thought I could go to the library and really figure out how to solve the cube. But after spending two hours, maybe three, sitting in the library turning that cube and trying to get it right, I couldn’t figure it out. I put the book down in disgust and realized I was going to lose a box of floppy disks.

Then, a dark thought crossed my mind. Perhaps I wasn’t going to lose a box of floppy disks. Perhaps I could solve the cube with a more unconventional way. That’s right, I decided I was going to do one of two things—I was going to take my Rubik’s Cube apart, or I was going to take the stickers off and reapply them.

At first glance, I thought the sticker thing might be easier. But then it occurred to me that maybe they would lose their stick-ability, and I wouldn’t be able to put them back on. So I went home, got a screwdriver, and started trying to pry the Rubik’s Cube apart.

Now, since then, I’ve learned to properly take a Rubik’s Cube apart. You sort of give it a quarter turn, and then you can pop the pieces off. Back then, I started to just take the cube and jab a screwdriver at the center cube, which I thought wasn’t attached to the base. And soon it wouldn’t be. And I pried upward, and that center piece popped into the air.

I had busted my Rubik’s Cube in an attempt to score some floppy disks. The real weird thing about this is, I decided not to bring it up to my friends. And they didn’t either. So, the bet itself went nowhere. Which was often the case with our bets. You take them seriously, then people kind of forget about them when something else would happen. But I had a constant reminder—my busted Rubik’s Cube. It would be a few years before I was able to pick another one up at a garage sale. And I would work on that one, failing most of the time until I finally figured it out and now can solve the Rubik’s Cube without breaking it or removing the stickers.

I don’t know why I’m so fascinated with the Rubik’s Cube, but I always have been. Maybe it’s the puzzle, maybe it’s the colors, maybe it’s the cartoon that I was obsessed with during its brief run. I’m not sure. But on today’s show, we’re going to talk about the cartoon, Rubik the Amazing Cube. We’ll talk about the people behind the camera, people doing the voices, the plot, the show’s all-too-brief run, the theme song, and where you can find Rubik the Amazing Cube today. We have an info-packed episode ahead of us, so without further ado, let’s start the show.

( *synth video game music* )

Host: Rubik the Amazing Cube ran from September of 1983 to September of 1984, and

it was produced by Ruby-Spears. It was on TV as part of the Pac-Man Rubik the Amazing Cube Hour on ABC. Ruby-Spears, the creators of the show, is a California-based production company that specializes in animation. It was founded in 1977 by Joe Ruby and Ken Spears. They had both started out as sound editors at Hanna-Barbera and would eventually start writing stories on shows like The Herculoids and Space Ghost.

In the late 60s, they were tasked with developing a cartoon for Saturday morning that was mystery-based. The end result would be the iconic Scooby Doo Where Are You. Eventually, they would depart from Hanna-Barbera…