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# THE CHICKEN TIMER

Monologues / Dramedy / 2-3 min  
Cast 1 Female x1

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*Ninety minutes into divorce mediation, Renee interrupts the fight over the house to ask for a broken kitchen timer shaped like a chicken. Her ex thinks she is being petty. She explains, to him and the mediator, exactly what it was for.*

## CHARACTERS

**RENEE** - 46, composed, dry, and holding it together by choosing one small fight she can win

## SETTING

*A mediator's office with a round table, mid-afternoon, ninety minutes into a divorce mediation that has just gone quiet.*

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*A mediator's office. A round table, a box of tissues nobody has touched, two thick folders. RENEE, 46, has been civil for ninety minutes. Across from her, her ex. At the head of the table, the mediator. The room has gone quiet.*

## RENEE

The chicken.

*(to the mediator)*

Sorry. Carol. I know we're on the house. I know the house is the big one and I know Greg's lawyer would like me to keep looking at the house. But before we get there, I want the chicken.

It's a timer. Kitchen timer. It's yellow, it's shaped like a chicken, you twist its head and it ticks. It was a wedding present from somebody neither of us can remember, and it has never once in nineteen years kept accurate time. It runs slow. About eight minutes slow on a ten-minute egg. We figured that out in the first apartment, the one where the shower was also, technically, the kitchen.

*Greg starts to say something. She holds up a hand.*

I know you don't care about the chicken.  
That's why I'm gonna get it. It's the only  
thing in that whole folder that's gonna be  
easy.

*(to Carol)*

Here's why, and then we can do the house.

When the kids were little, we had a rule.  
After bedtime, before the dishes, before  
either of us looked at a phone, we set the  
chicken. Ten minutes. And you had to talk.  
Not about the kids, not about the money, not  
about his mother. Just, what happened to you  
today. Who were you today. Ten minutes.  
Except it was really eighteen, because of  
the chicken. And we knew that. And we never  
fixed it. That was kinda the point. It was  
the one thing in the house that gave us more  
than we asked for.

*(beat)*

And then at some point, we stopped. I've  
been trying to figure out when. There's no  
date. Nobody decided. One night it just  
didn't get set, and the night after that,  
and by the time I noticed, it'd been, what,  
a year? Two? It was on the windowsill behind  
the dish soap. I found it when I was packing.

*She looks at Greg for the first time.*

I stood in the kitchen and I twisted its  
head, and it still ticks. It still works. It  
was never the chicken.

*(quieter)*

I want it because I want to know which one  
of us stopped first. And I think I know. I  
think it was me. I think I was tired, and I  
told myself you'd notice. And you didn't.

And that's not... that's not a thing you get to put in a folder.

*She sits back. Composes herself. Back to business.*

So. I get the chicken. You get the good knives. And I'm not fighting you on the house, Greg. I never was.

*(to Carol)*

Okay. The house.

END OF SCRIPT