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1 INT. BURNT TOAST DINER 1

H.R.G. hangs up the phone, just as LAUREN GILMORE joins him in the booth. Lauren's attractive. Quirky. A glass half full girl, who doesn't like losing the smile from her face.

LAUREN
Everything okay?

H.R.G.
Yeah. Fine.

H.R.G. takes a bite of his pancakes, trying to avoid the situation

LAUREN
You're making the Sandra face.

H.R.G.
I don't have a "Sandra Face."

LAUREN
Every time you have to lie to her. It's kind of hang dog and your eyebrows furrow. And you get this line --

She points out a tension wrinkle on H.R.G.'s forehead. H.R.G. raises his eyebrows -- unfurrowed.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
You don't have to lie to me. We both work for the company. You know you can talk to me about anything.

And he knows he can -- he's thankful for it.

H.R.G.
Okay... yes. I'd love to tell Sandra I'm missing homecoming because I'm trying to catch a deranged serial killer with super powers.

LAUREN
That you're not a mild mannered paper salesman, but when you take off those glasses you're...

H.R.G.
Trying to save our daughter's life.

LAUREN
The line is actually, "Superman."

(CONTINUED)

MF
START →
"LAUREN"

Sc. 1

HEROES

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1 CONTINUED:

1

Lauren's concern is genuine. Kind. Caring:

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Lying sucks. Especially to family. I mean, I wish I could tell my mom I missed my nephew's bar-mitzvah because I bagged a special who shoots fire out of his nose. But, I can't.

H.R.G.

What'd you tell her?

LAUREN

PMS.

H.R.G. smiles. They have a friendship and an ease between them that we've never seen H.R.G. have before.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I got something that'll cheer you up.

Lauren reaches into her purse and pulls out -- A LIGHTER. The same lighter we saw him with earlier. Bullseye on one side. His initials engraved on the other.

H.R.G. looks at it -- upset:

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Did I do something wrong?

H.R.G.

Smoking is just another thing I hide from Sandra. I should really just quit.

LAUREN

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to --

Lauren moves to take the lighter back. But, H.R.G. stops her -- putting his hand on hers, for a brief moment. Then taking the lighter.

H.R.G.

No. Thank you. I appreciate it -- It's nice to have a friend I can really talk to.

Lauren takes a sip of coffee. This is hard to talk about -- but she sees her opening and she takes it:

LAUREN

Is that what this is? Two friends? Talking?

(CONTINUED)

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1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

H.R.G.

What would you call it?

And Lauren's not sure she should open this door, but --

LAUREN

Flirting. It's just been so long you don't know what it sounds like.

(then off his look)

I mean, we've been having breakfast twice a week for months now. The pancakes here aren't that good.

And H.R.G. has to admit it too -- maybe there is something more to all this.

H.R.G.

No. They're not.

LAUREN

You and I. We can talk about anything. Everything it's... I know you have feelings for me. And I know you'd never admit it. So I'm taking the initiative.

She puts a MOTEL ROOM KEY on the table. OLD. BRASS. Attached to a plastic key chain, with a ROOM NUMBER.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I got the lighter when I booked this motel room. Crazy, right? Or not. This afternoon. Four-ish.

And that offer just hangs there in the most awkward silence of H.R.G.'s life, until -- H.R.G.'s cell phone RINGS. He picks up -- listens for a moment.

H.R.G.

No. I'll be right there -- don't do anything without me.

He hangs up the phone. Deadly serious.

He looks at Lauren. Unsure of what to make about her offer. She takes the key off the table --

LAUREN

Go. I'll meet you at the office.

—END

2 INT. PRIMATECH - HALLWAY

2

H.R.G. finds Lauren talking with a CO-WORKER. She looks up from her conversation and makes eye-contact with H.R.G. --

(CONTINUED)