The Desk

Jim the pencil sat in his cup, freshly sharpened and feeling relaxed. He looked around the suspicious territory known as the classroom, as Miss Tayler called it. Miss Tayler was the ruler of their land called the Desk. She decided who was used for grading, and who was to be sharpened or replaced and when it was to happen. Jim looked out of his cup at the Desk and saw Ronald the Rubber Band Ball sitting at the foot of Jim’s cup. Ronald was the mailman, and today he carried a large, folded up Post-It note. “For me?” Jim asked.

“Yes. I heard it was from Mary the pen, from the other side of the Desk.” Ronald said in his springy voice. Jim looked at how far the Desk extended. It was a wraparound desk, which was a rare kind of Desk.

The Post-It note was signed in Mary’s own ink, saying he was to meet her at the other end of the Desk shortly. Jim hopped out of his cup and put the note in his pocket. He looked at Ronald. “Do you have a map?”

Ronald nodded and handed over a separate Post-It note and Jim put that note in his pocket as well. Then he set off on his journey.

After about ten minutes of walking, Jim was lost in a field of folders, stamps, and broken crayons. The crayons cried in agony as Jim passed by. Quietly, Jim pulled out the map and stared at it. First on his list of obstacles to go through was “The Field”. The Field had no purpose other than that Miss Tayler hadn’t gotten around to throwing the scattered items away. Jim ran through the rest of The Field and panted when he finally escaped the torturous disorder of The Field.

Jim glanced at the map once more. Next on the list was Tupperlake. Jim had never seen it from his cup or even heard of it from gossip around the Desk. He had no idea what to expect. Suddenly, he heard something. Jim spun to his left and saw a drawer sliding open all the way across Jim’s path. A small, crackling voice was heard from Jim’s feet. Jim looked down and a hand-held eraser looked up at him. “You think you’re gonna cross?” The eraser scowled.

“I was kind of hoping to.” Jim mumbled, in shock by the paper clips and razor-sharp scissors that swarmed in Tupperlake.

“Well you can’t unless you use the bridge!! And I don’t see any bridge, do YOU?” The eraser laughed evilly and Jim stared at the lake again.

“How do I get a bridge?”
“Answer this riddle.” The eraser said, handing Jim yet another Post-It note. Jim sighed. *Which word in the dictionary is spelled incorrectly?*

“That’s easy. Incorrectly is spelled i-n-c-o-r-r-e-c-t-l-y.” Jim said, laughing at the simplicity of the riddle. He’d spent many years spelling!

The eraser did a little jig to make the bridge appear. Jim thanked the eraser and began to climb over the bridge. When he reached the other side of Tupperlake, Jim waved and began to walk on his journey to the other side of the Desk once more. Jim looked at the map again to see how much farther he had. It couldn’t be long now!

No longer than two minutes had passed before Jim saw a large mountain of used staples and packets of new staples. It was as tall as him! He prepared himself for and started up the mountain. Just as he reached its peak, a giant stapler glared at him.

“What are you doing?” the stapler growled.

“I’m just trying to get to Mary’s. I need to pass this mountain in order to do that.”

“THIS mountain? Mount Staple? You must be off your head. Anyone with sense would have turned back long ago.”

“Most people don’t get past Tupperlake, I suppose.” Jim said simply.

The stapler studied Jim for a minute. If Jim had a watch, he would have checked it. The stapler coughed. “Hmph, follow me. I’ll take you to Sally.”

The stapler turned and walked down the left slope of the mountain. Jim quietly followed. The stapler then opened a large, heavy wooden door that led to a foyer colored in shades of red and purple. A beautiful girl stapler sat in a throne.

“I’m Sally. You’re lucky my dad is sick today or he would’ve had your head for climbing this mountain. But I’ll let you off easy, because I heard where you were going.” Sally motioned to a pod in the corner of the foyer and Jim was led to it. He sat in the pod’s seat and was told to press a green button. Carefully, he pushed it and a force shot him out of the launch area. He landed in front of a giant castle—Mary’s castle. Jim smiled and stepped out of the pod. Mary ran out to greet Jim.

“Jim!” she yelled, holding out her arms for a hug. Jim laughed and embraced her as well. They hadn’t seen each other in months! Just a minute or two after lunch, Miss Tayler and the small children of her kingdom stampeded through the door.
Miss Tayler began to write numbers in clear, large print. 2+2 was now written on the whiteboard. The children screamed “four”. Miss Tayler told her people to read and picked up a sheet of paper. She sat in her leather chair and slid her glasses on. When she found nothing in her pencil cup after fishing around for a second, she scanned the Desk. She zeroed in on Jim and picked him up. After signing the sheet with her name, Miss Tayler stood and walked around the Desk to where her computer lay. She set Jim into his pencil cup and began to type up a lesson plan. Jim couldn’t believe it. Mary was once again on the other side of the Desk.

He was right back where he started.