

An illustration of a young boy and girl in a traditional Beijing Hutong courtyard. The boy is in the foreground, looking up with wide eyes, holding a red book. The girl is in the background, standing by an easel with a painting. A glowing yellow butterfly is flying in the upper right corner, surrounded by golden sparkles. The scene is set in a courtyard with stone walls and a red lantern hanging in the background.

Xiao Ming's Beijing Hutong Adventure

Ming Dynasty

Xiao Ming stood
at the entrance of
a quiet, grey-walled
Beijing hutong,
holding a small red kite.





Suddenly, a brilliant golden butterfly fluttered past Xiao Ming's nose, sparkling like a tiny star.

Captivated by its magical glow, he gripped his kite tightly and followed the shimmering creature deeper into the winding alleyway.

The butterfly led him past an grand, traditional courtyard house...

Go on, Xiao Ming!
Chase your dreams!

Where are you
taking me?

...where dreams
waited just beyond
the gate.



Up ahead, the sweet, fruity aroma of candied hawthorns filled the air. A vendor with a bicycle stacked high with bright red, sugar-glazed tanghulu skewers pointed his finger toward the rooftops, showing Xiao Ming where the butterfly had flown.



High above, the golden butterfly danced among the gray rooftop tiles, where a family of sleepy gray cats watched with curious eyes. Xiao Ming looked up in awe, realizing how the ancient roofs looked like waves in a calm, stone sea.



The butterfly dipped low into a hidden garden courtyard, where a magnificent pomegranate tree stood in full bloom. Xiao Ming gasped at the brilliant red flowers, feeling as though he had stepped inside a living, breathing painting.



The golden butterfly
rested for a brief moment
right on the tip of the
artist's paint brush





A sudden gust of
wind, and the butterfly
was high, pulling
Xiao Ming's gaze.
Far off, the White
Pagoda rose into
the blue.

As dusk began to settle, the butterfly gently transformed into a soft, glowing light that merged with the bright red lanterns hanging along the alley.

The entire hutong lit up with a warm, cozy crimson radiance, guiding Xiao Ming back toward his home.



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Xiao Ming finally reached his own front door, where his mother was waiting with an open embrace. He looked up at the starry Beijing sky, knowing that the magic of the ancient city would always be right outside his doorstep.

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