Feifei
So Neil…

Neil
Yes, Feifei?

Feifei
Everyone’s asking – who was that beautiful woman who you were at lunch with?

Neil
Ah, she’s a… just a friend. A new friend. Err, a very nice, new friend.

Feifei
Ooh, you really like her!

Neil
Well, yes. She’s lovely. She’s a doctor.

Feifei
Neil, I just can’t help thinking… she’s so pretty!

Neil
What are you saying, Feifei? She’s too pretty for me? As you know, I punch above my weight!

Feifei
You certainly do. And I’m not saying you’re fat!

Neil
Haha. Yes, ‘to punch above your weight’ is our phrase on The English We Speak. It means to achieve beyond what is expected of you.

Feifei
We can use it to describe the performance or influence of companies or even countries… Or in this case - when Neil is going out with someone more attractive and successful – we say he is punching above his weight!
Neil
Hey, Feifei. That was a bit harsh. Anyway, let's hear these examples.

Examples
Croatia punches above its weight when it comes to football. It has a population of under 5 million, but came second in the World Cup.

Even as a small business, you can punch above your weight if you focus on quality and build a strong brand.

Some of the cheaper smartphones are really punching above their weight - they're a fraction of the price but have got some great features.

Feifei
You're listening to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. Our expression is 'punch above your weight'. So, Neil, how did you meet this mystery woman?

Neil
Well, she's a doctor. You know I was going to boxing class earlier this year?

Feifei
Yes, how's that going?

Neil
Well, I stopped. I was training with someone much bigger than me, and I, err… broke my nose.

Feifei
You were literally punching above your weight!

Neil
Yes. And who should I meet at the hospital but this beautiful doctor!

Feifei
Well, it's a good story. Shame it's not true.

Neil
I know. I've never boxed in my life!

Feifei
And I know you had lunch alone today.

Neil
Ahh. But I hope the story helps teach this phrase!
Feifei
I hope so too.

Neil
Anyway, if you're not busy... fancy lunch tomorrow, Feifei?

Feifei
There you go again, punching above your weight! Bye.

[punch]

Crowd
Ouch! That must have hurt!