coupang newsroom

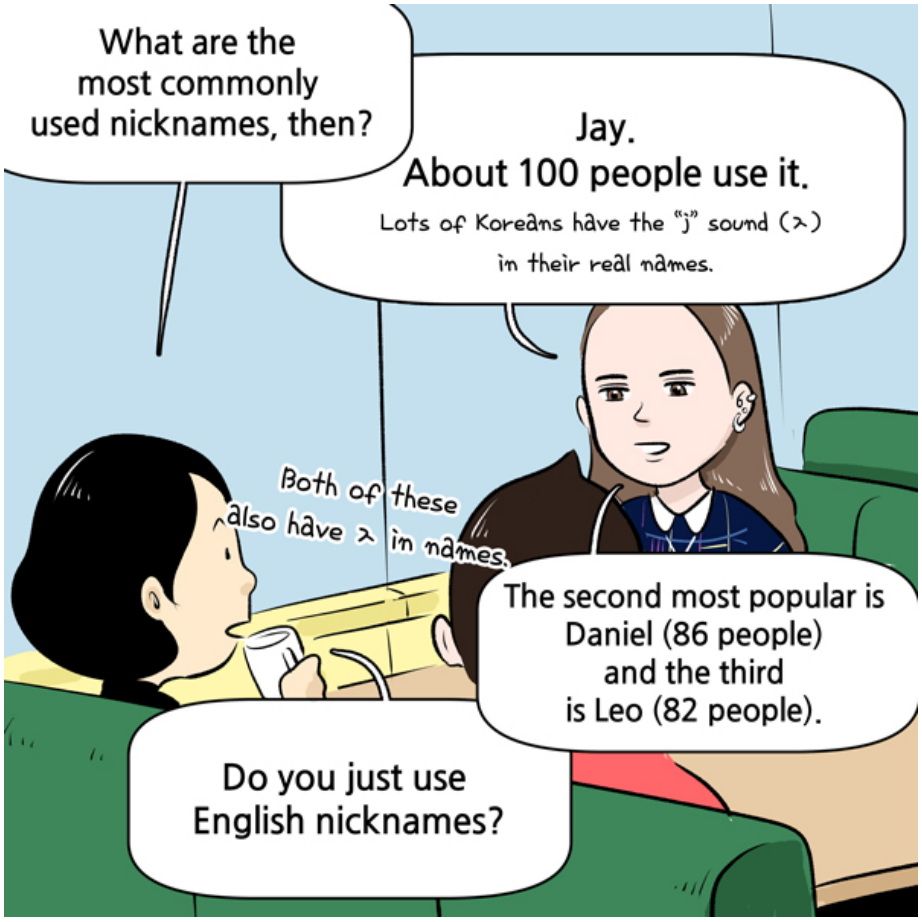
Dear My Coupang - What's Your Nickname?

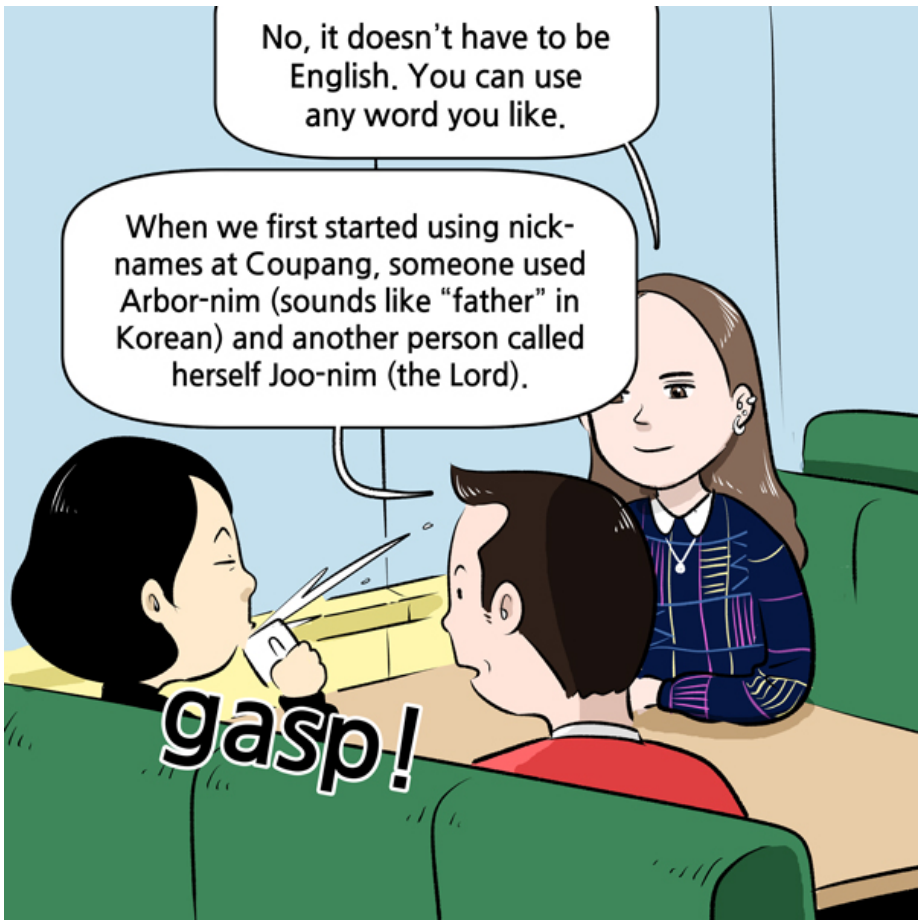
2022. 1. 19.

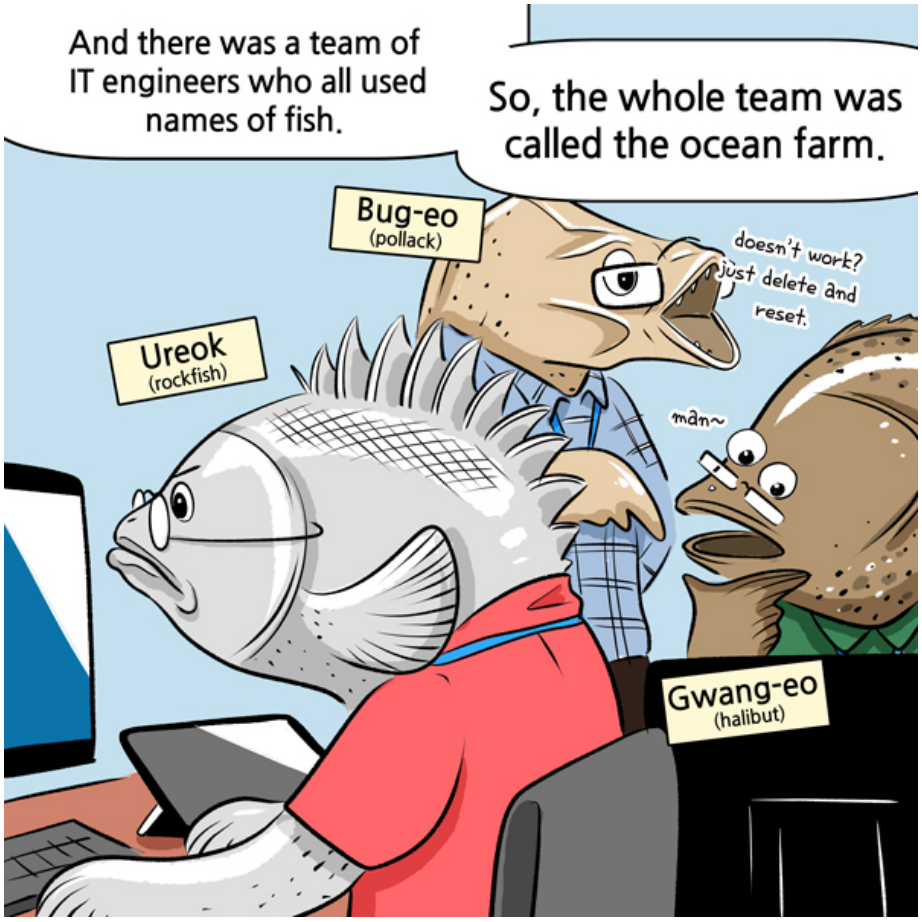
Sergei,
I have a question.
What?
Is Sergei
your real name?
You know
I was born and raised in Korea.
Sergei's my nickname.
Coupang values horizontal
organizational culture,
so we call each other
by nicknames or first names.
Then people call you
Sergei *Timjang-nim*
(manager), as is the
Korean corporate custom?
Nah. We don't use such titles.
It's always just "nickname + *nim*."
The same goes for
top executives and leaders.
*Nim: a common honorific suffix in Korea

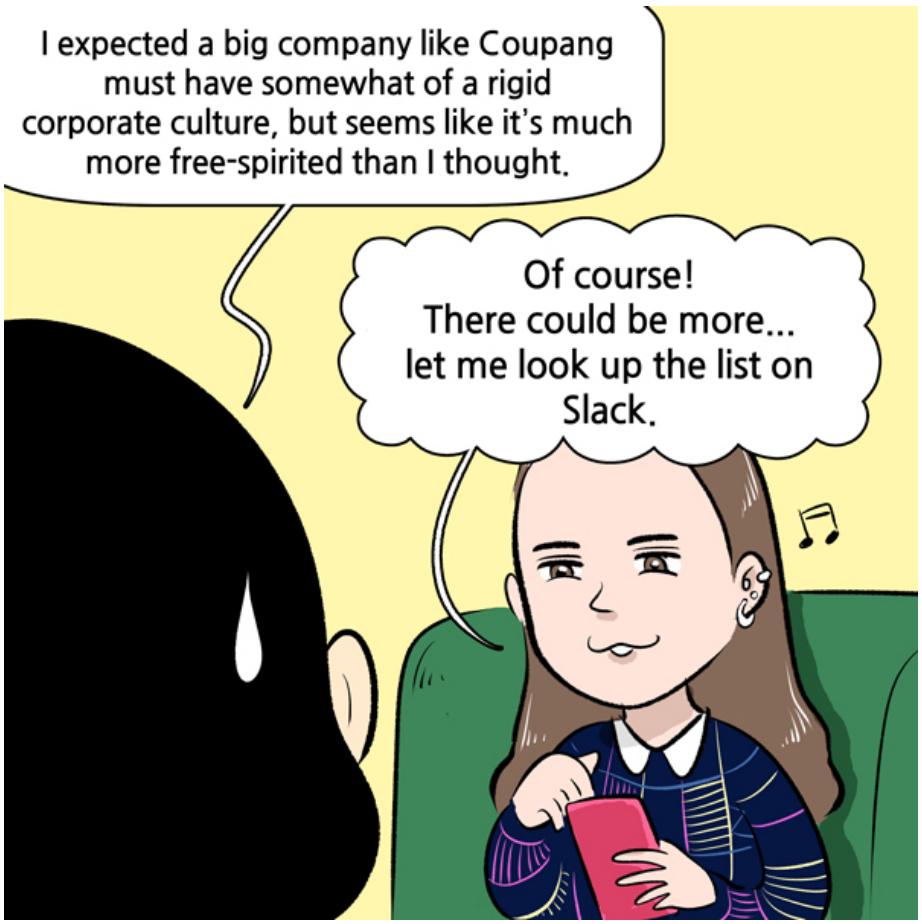
Interesting, tell me more about it.
Angelina from the Employer Branding team is going to explain it to you.
A Gen-Z talent from France

There are people of many nationalities in Coupang, so nicknames are quite convenient for efficient communication.
(Speaking in Korean)
We don't know who is senior to whom, so we get to build relationships based on tasks, not on the level of seniority.
(Speaking in Korean)
잘잘~
Isn't she by any chance a Korean who just looks non-Korean?
C'mon This is 2022. you think that only Koreans are fluent in Korean?

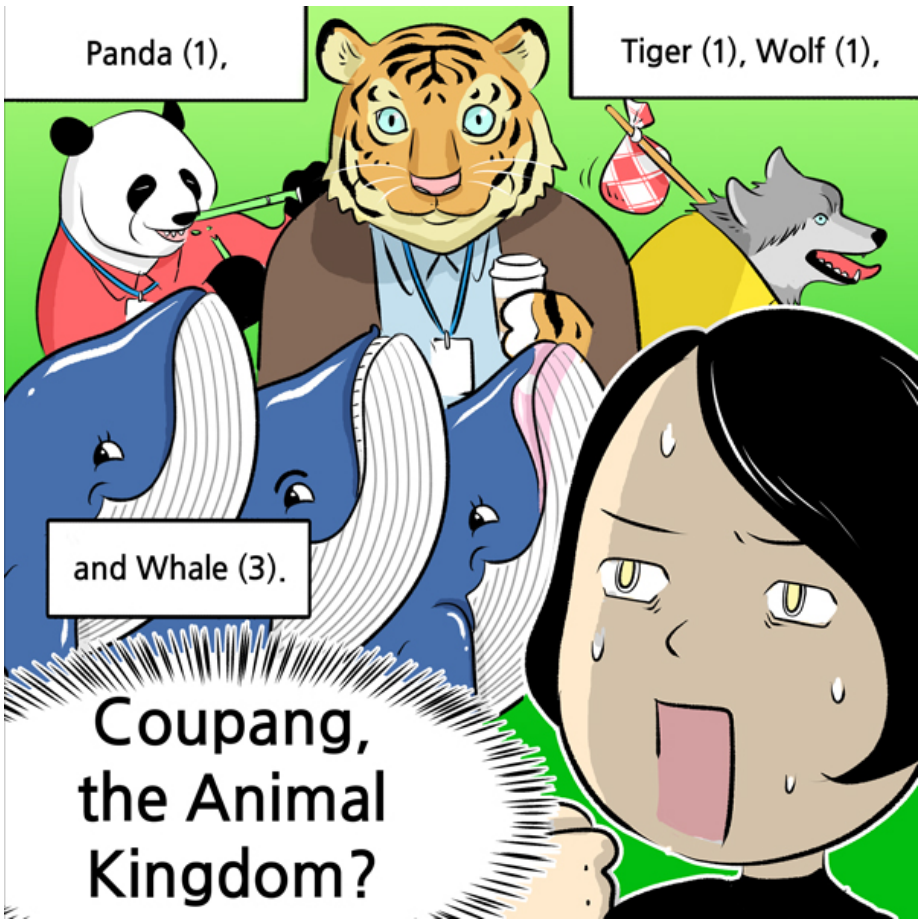

What are the most commonly used nicknames, then?
Jay.
About 100 people use it.
Lots of Koreans have the "j" sound (ㅈ) in their real names.
Both of these also have ㅈ in names.
The second most popular is Daniel (86 people) and the third is Leo (82 people).
Do you just use English nicknames?

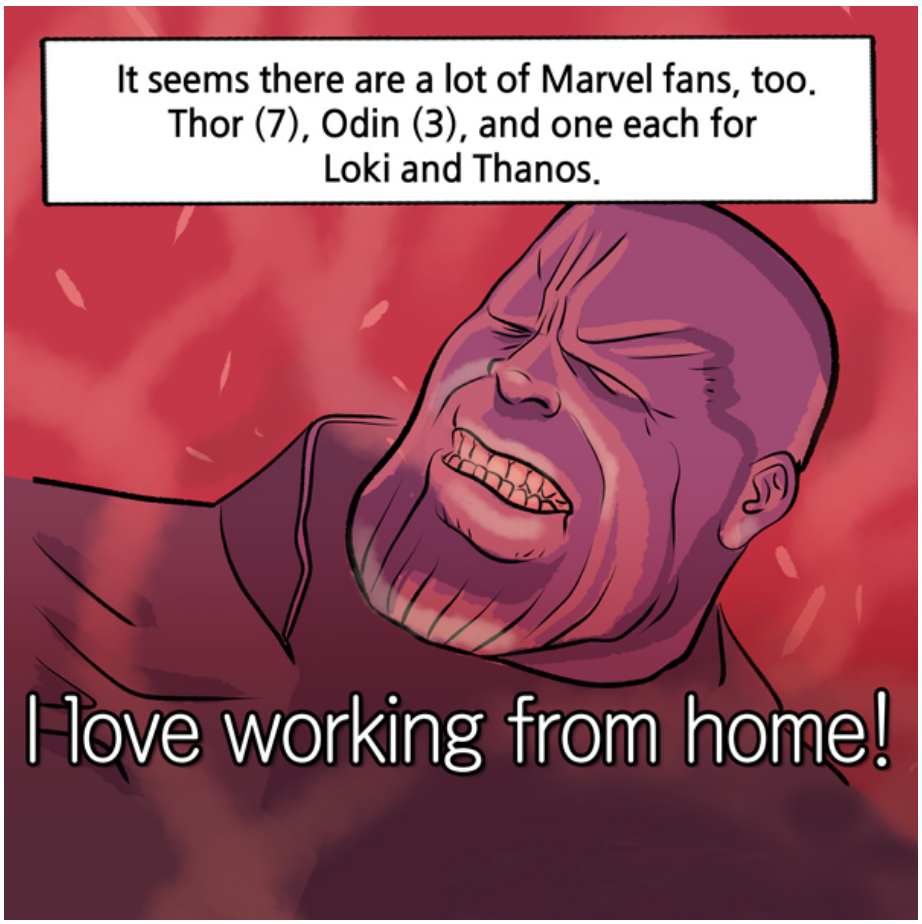

No, it doesn't have to be English. You can use any word you like.
When we first started using nicknames at Coupang, someone used Arbor-nim (sounds like "father" in Korean) and another person called herself Joo-nim (the Lord).
gasp!

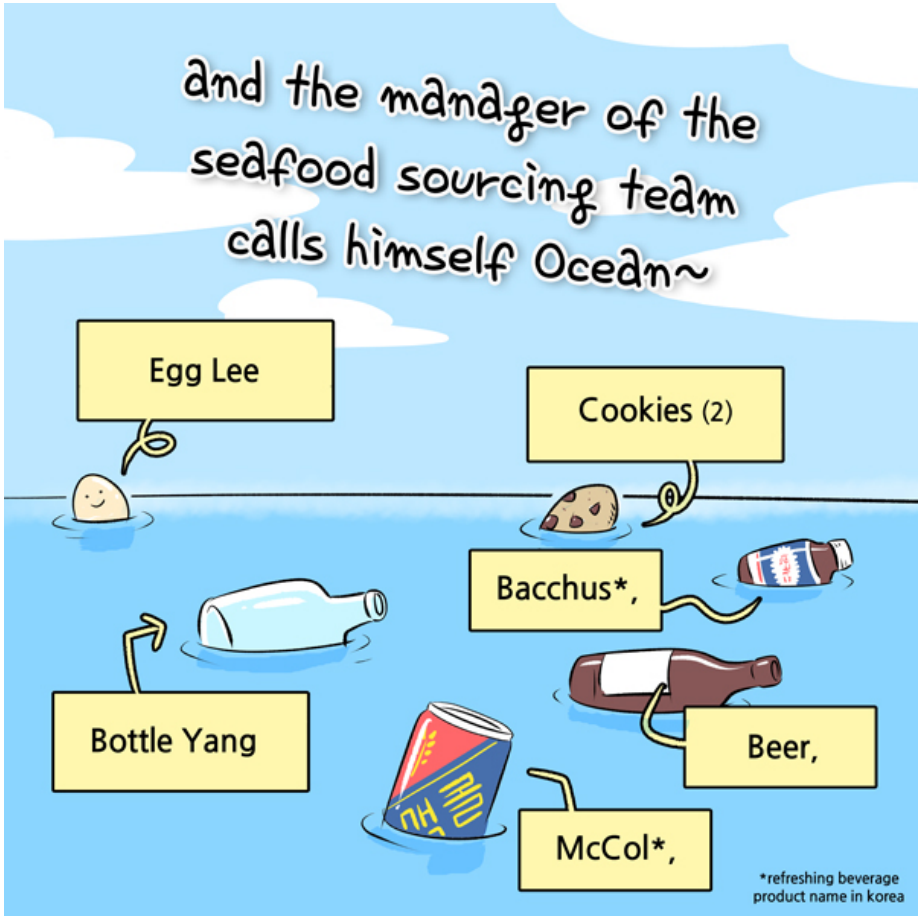

And there was a team of IT engineers who all used names of fish.
So, the whole team was called the ocean farm.
Bug-eo (pollack)
Ureok (rockfish)
Gwang-eo (halibut)
doesn't work? just delete and reset.
man~

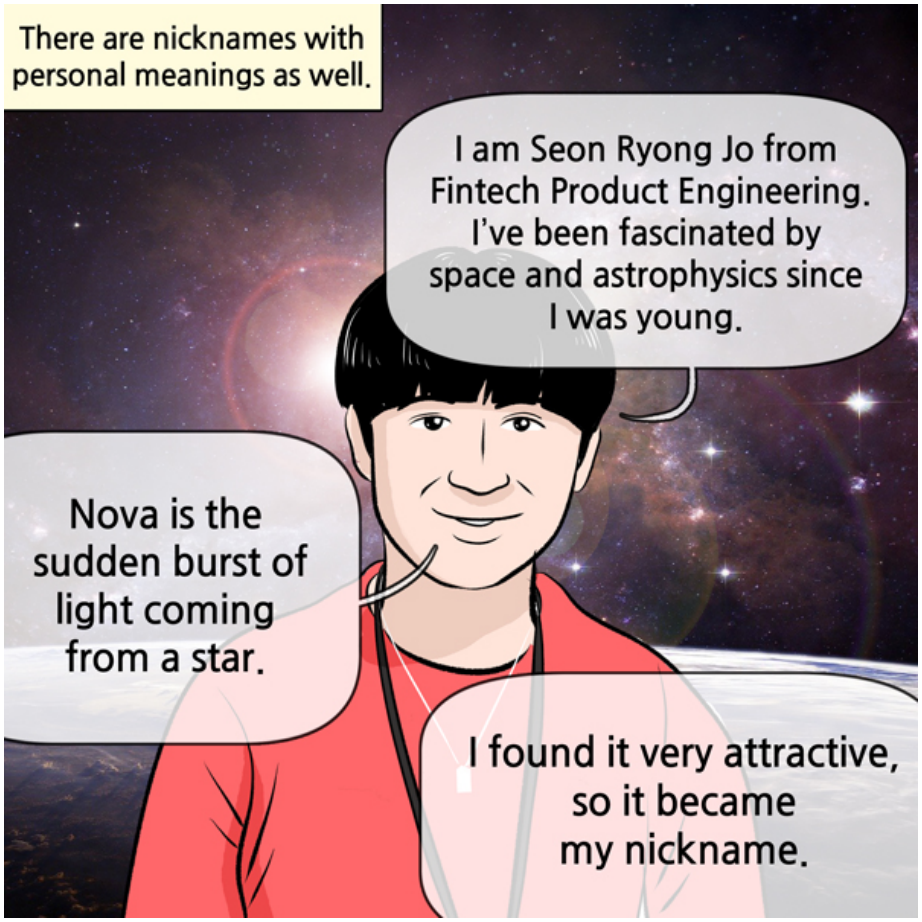

I expected a big company like Coupang must have somewhat of a rigid corporate culture, but seems like it's much more free-spirited than I thought.
Of course! There could be more... let me look up the list on Slack.

There is one person called Android...
We also have Tank, Missile, and Neo...
Coupang, the Empire of Machines!?


Panda (1),
Tiger (1), Wolf (1),
and Whale (3).
Coupang, the Animal Kingdom?

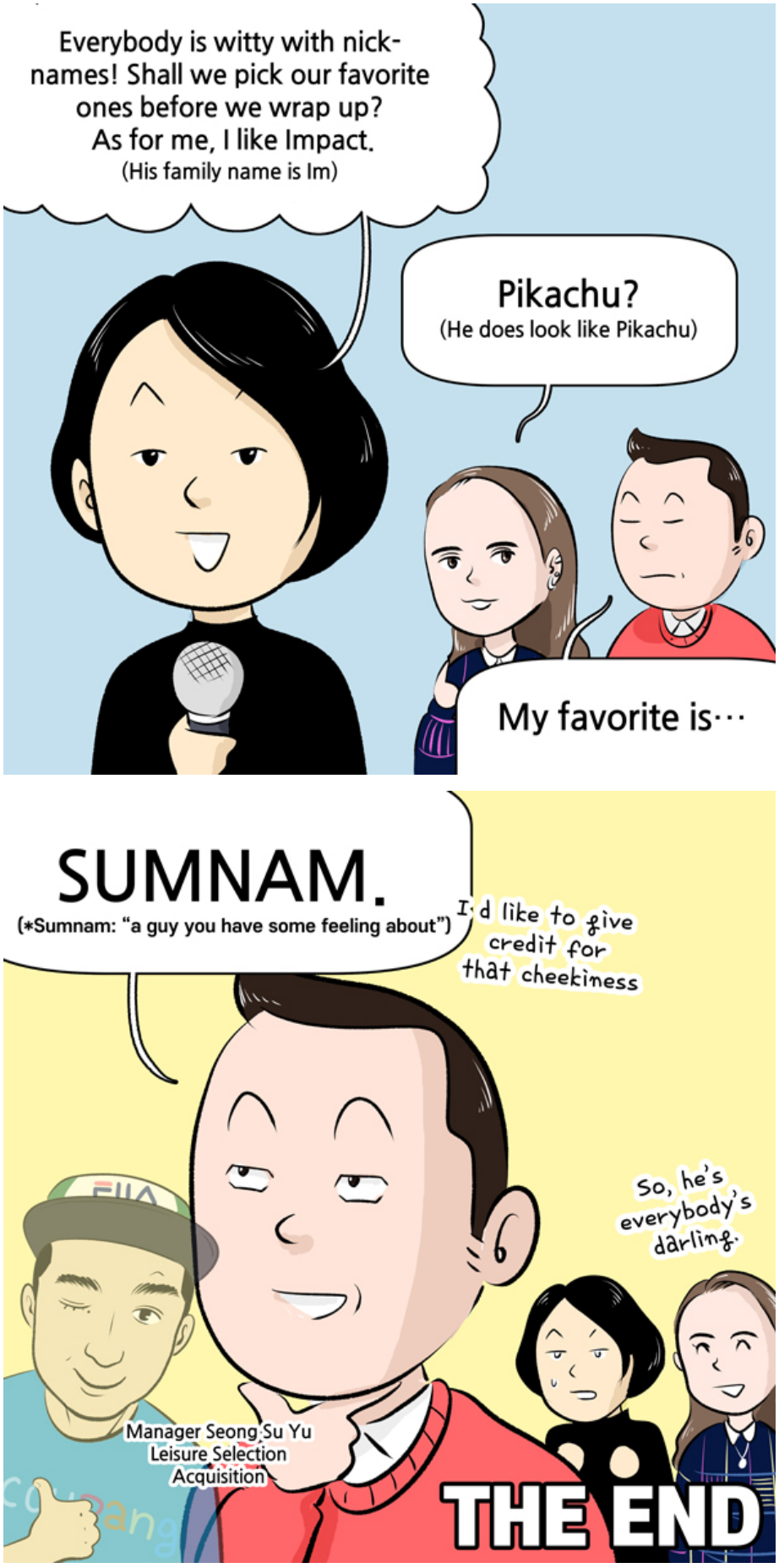

It seems there are a lot of Marvel fans, too.
Thor (7), Odin (3), and one each for Loki and Thanos.
I love working from home!


and the manager of the seafood sourcing team calls himself Ocean~
Egg Lee
Cookies (2)
Bacchus*,
Bottle Yang
Beer,
McCol*,
*refreshing beverage product name in korea


There are nicknames with personal meanings as well.
I am Seon Ryong Jo from Fintech Product Engineering. I've been fascinated by space and astrophysics since I was young.
Nova is the sudden burst of light coming from a star.
I found it very attractive, so it became my nickname.

I named myself after my favorite guitarist, John Peter Petrucci!
I actually wanted to use Gibson but it was already taken by somebody else!
Rucci
Busker
I used to do busking~ when I lived in Ireland~

Can someone be named by someone else?
I was. I couldn't decide my nickname when I first came here, so my boss gave me one.
How about Sergei? I am a fan of Russian literature.
Cool, sounds like a secret agent!



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