

Practical Malware Analysis & Triage Malware Analysis Report

Unknown_RE1012018.zip

Feb 2024 | Amna Jasser | vl.0



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Executive Summary

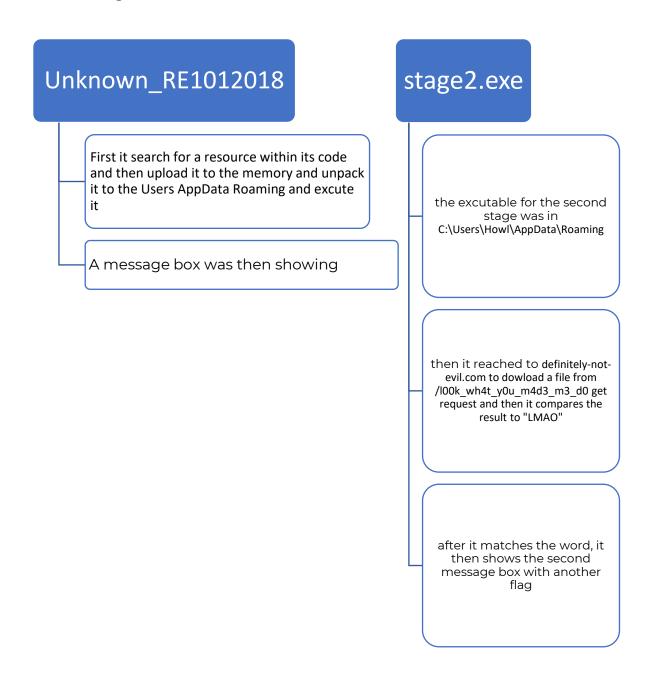
The malware `unknown_re1012018` is a PE (Portable Executable) file that intricately conceals another PE within its code. This embedded PE, identified as "stage2.exe," is systematically extracted, uploaded into the system's memory, and unpacked in the Users' AppData Roaming directory. Following this process, the unpacked resource is executed, revealing a multifaceted approach to its malicious operations. The subsequent steps involve communication with the server definitely-not-evil.com, where a file is downloaded using a GET request from the specified path "/IOOk_wh4t_yOu_m4d3_m3_dO." The content of this downloaded file is then compared to the string "LMAO." Upon a successful match, a second message box is displayed, signifying the completion of the second stage and potentially providing a flag or pertinent information about the malware's activities. This layered execution strategy demonstrates the malware's sophistication in evading detection and executing malicious actions.

YARA signature rules are attached in Appendix A. Malware sample and hashes have been submitted to VirusTotal for further examination.



High-Level Technical Summary

Unknown_RE1012018.exe is a PE file that unpacked to another PE file which is the next stage.





- Step 1: Search for a resource "stage2.exe" within the code.
- Step 2: Upload the resource to the memory.
- Step 3: Unpack the resource to the Users' AppData Roaming directory.
- Step 4: Execute the unpacked resource.
- Step 5: A message box appears.
- Step 6: stage2.exe executes and connect to definitely-not-evil.com.
- Step 7: Download a file from /l00k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0 using a GET request.
- Step 8: Compare the result of the download to the string "LMAO."
- Step 9: After matching the word, display a second message box.



Malware Composition

Unknown_RE1012018.exe consists of the following components:

File Name	SHA256 Hash
Unknown_RE1012018	92730427321A1C4CCFC0D0580834DAEF98121EFA9BB
	8963DA332BFD6CF1FDA8A
stage2.exe	3EDA6E2DAE6FA86245A688EB24E0A29BF206242560C71C9D7726E5DE02D4538A

Unknown_RE1012018

The initial PE file that is packed with another PE stage2.exe, in the code it holds a flag and a message box will show.

Stage2.exe

This file is unpacked from the first file, then it connects to definitely-not-evil.com and request from it / 100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0 and compare it to "lmao" and if it's the same it will show another message box with a flag.



Basic Static Analysis

{Screenshots and description about basic static artifacts and methods}

Looking at the **strings** output we see:

!This program cannot be run in DOS mode. (twice)			
hflagh{i_shtay_hout_htoo_hlateh_goth_nothhingh_in_hmy_bhrainj}			
00000A70 Im totally malware			
00000A84 totally not malware			
Dimmaletyoufinishbut			
definitely-not-evil.com			
100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0			
stage2.exe			
00000E07 Dimmaletyoufinishbut			
00001F10 100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0			

Since this !This program cannot be run in DOS mode. Was appeared twice then there is an indication that there is another PE file within the PE file.

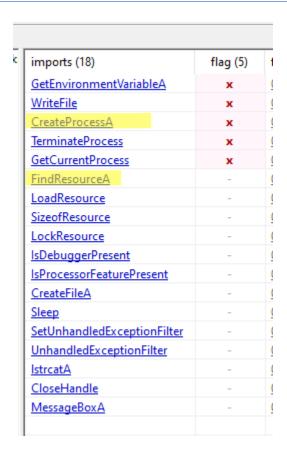
PEStudio:

Notice the first 2 bytes are MZ meaning it's a PE Binary

pFile		Raw Data	Value
00000000	4D 5A 90 00 03 00 0	0 00 04 00 00 00 FF FF	00 00 MZ
00000010	B8 00 00 00 00 00 0	0 00 40 00 00 00 00 00	00 00
00000020	00 00 00 00 00 00 0	0 00 00 00 00 00 00	00 00

file-type: executable





- Notice that is using <u>FindResourceA</u> and <u>CreateProcessA</u>. This means the executable might be extracting something out of the resource section and run it as a new process.

It is also checking if it is running in a debugger:





And this is the import table:

pFile	Data	Description	Value
0000A00	00002124	Hint/Name RVA	0088 CreateFileA
0000A04	00002132	Hint/Name RVA	014B FindResourceA
80A0000	00002142	Hint/Name RVA	0341 LoadResource
0000A0C	00002152	Hint/Name RVA	0 <mark>525 WriteFile</mark>
0000A10	0000215E	Hint/Name RVA	04B2 Sleep
0000A14	00002166	Hint/Name RVA	04B1 SizeofResource
0000A18	00002178	Hint/Name RVA	00A4 CreateProcessA
0000A1C	0000218A	Hint/Name RVA	053E IstrcatA
0000A20	00002196	Hint/Name RVA	01DB GetEnvironmentVariableA
0000A24	000021B0	Hint/Name RVA	0354 LockResource
0000A28	000021C0	Hint/Name RVA	0052 CloseHandle
0000A2C	00002258	Hint/Name RVA	0300 IsDebuggerPresent
0000A30	0000223A	Hint/Name RVA	04A5 SetUnhandledExceptionFilter
0000A34	000021F6	Hint/Name RVA	04C0 TerminateProcess
0000A38	0000220A	Hint/Name RVA	01C0 GetCurrentProcess
0000A3C	0000221E	Hint/Name RVA	04D3 UnhandledExceptionFilter
0000A40	0000226C	Hint/Name RVA	0304 IsProcessorFeaturePresent
0000A44	00000000	End of Imports	KERNEL32.dll
0000A48	000021DC	Hint/Name RVA	020E MessageBoxA
0000A4C	00000000	End of Imports	USER32.dll

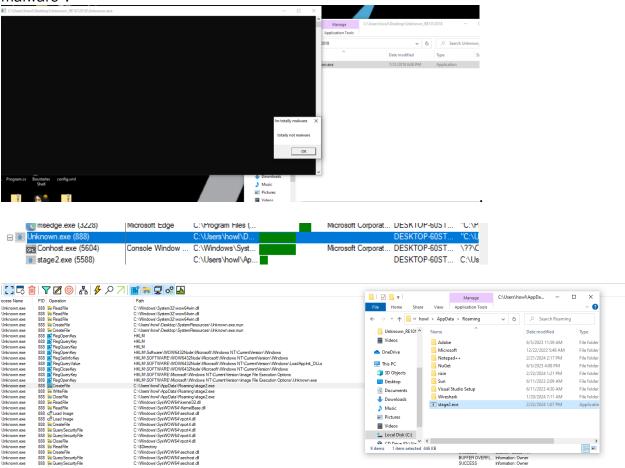


Basic Dynamic Analysis

{Screenshots and description about basic dynamic artifacts and methods}

When running the file without internet connection:

1- It shows a black command line for a second and a message box with "totally not malware":





When there is an internet connection:

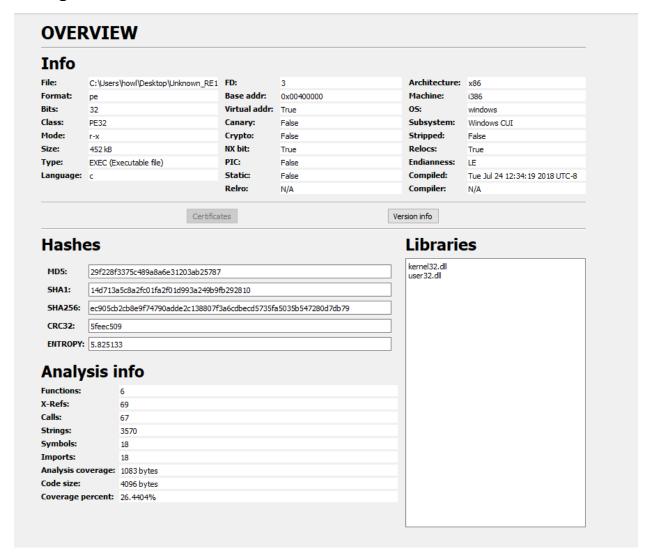
Even with internet it is the same result, So wee need to check with debugger.



Advanced Static Analysis

{Screenshots and description about findings during advanced static analysis} Could not

Looking at cutter info about this PE:

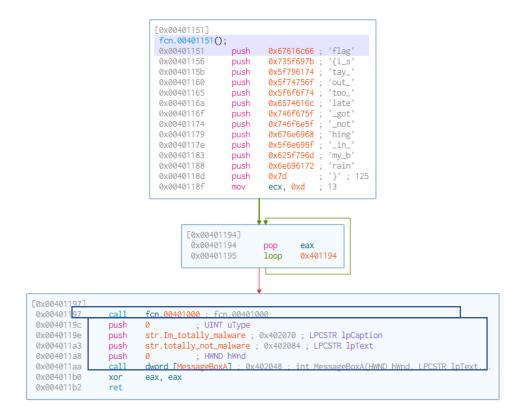


We now know it is built with C and x86 instruction.

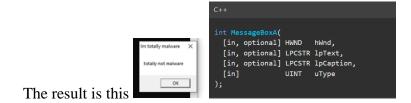


Looking at the main function of Unknown_RE1012018.exe:

Analysing Function 0x00401151:



- 1- In the first we see the flagh{i_stay_out_too_late_got_nothing_in_my_brain}
- 2- Then it will loop 13 times as loop decrement ecx value.
- 3- Then it will call function **0x00401000**
- 4- Call MessageBoxA function:



5- Xor eax, eax: This is a common idiom for zeroing out a register, set the eax register to 0 and then return from a subroutine.



Analyzing function **0x00401000**:

```
[0x0040104f]
             push0xa; 10 ; LPCSTR lpTypepush1; 1 ; LPCSTR lpNamepushesi; HMODULE hModule
0x0040104f
0x00401051
0x00401053
              call dword [FindResourceA]; 0x402004; HRSRC FindResourceA(HMODULE hModule, L...
0x00401054
0x0040105a
             mov esi, eax
                              ; HRSRC hResInfo
            push esi
push 0
0x0040105c
0x0040105d
                               ; HMODULE hModule
             call dword [SizeofResource]; 0x402014; DWORD SizeofResource(HMODULE hModule,...
0x0040105f
0x00401066
             push 0
                               ; HMODULE hModule
                     dword [nNumberOfBytesToWrite], eax
0x00401068
              mov
             call dword [LoadResource]; 0x402008; HGLOBAL LoadResource(HMODULE hModule, H...
0x0040106b
0x00401071
             mov ebx, eax
             call
            push
0x00401073
                               ; HGLOBAL hResData
0x00401074
                     dword [LockResource] ; 0x402024 ; LPVOID LockResource(HGLOBAL hResData)
0x0040107a test esi, esi
0x0040107c
             je
                     0x40113d
```

- 1- FindResourceA
- 2- SizeOfResource
- 3- LoadResource
- 4- LockResource

In this code: it Locate a resource within the executable and obtain a handle to the resource information. Then, determine its size and load it into memor(When you call LoadResource, it loads the specified resource (identified by the HRSRC handle) into memory, and it returns a handle (HGLOBAL) to the memory block where the resource is loaded. This handle allows you to access and manipulate the resource's data.).

Finally, obtain a pointer to the resource, allowing access to it and enabling its use.



```
[0x00401082]
0x00401082
               push
                       edi
0x00401083
                push
                       0xffff
                                  ; DWORD nSize
0x00401088
               push
0x0040108d
                       str.AppData ; 0x402058 ; LPCSTR lpName
               push
                                               iableA]; 0x402020; DWORD GetEnvironmentVariable...
0x00401092
0x00401098
                       edi, dword [lstrcatA] ; 0x40201c
               mov
0x0040109e
               neg
                       eax
0x004010a0
               sbb
                       esi, esi
0x004010a2
               push
                       data.00402060 ; 0x402060
0x004010a7
               and
                       esi, data.00403398; 0x403398
0x004010ad
                       esi
               push
0x004010ae
                       edi
0x004010b0
               push
                       str.stage2.exe ; 0x402064
               push
0x004010b5
                       esi
0x004010b6
                                  ; HANDLE hTemplateFile
0x004010b8
               push
                                 ; 128 ; DWORD dwFlagsAndAttributes
               push
0x004010ba
                       0x80
0x004010bf
                push
                                 ; 2 ; DWORD dwCreationDisposition
                              ; LPSECURITY_ATTRIBUTES lpSecurityAttributes
               push 0
0x004010c1
0x004010c3
               push
                                  ; DWORD dwShareMode
                       0x40000000 ; DWORD dwDesiredAccess
0x004010c5
               push
                              ; LPCSTR_lpFileName
               push
0x004010ca
                       esi
                       dword [CreateFileA]; 0x402000; HANDLE CreateFileA(LPCSTR lpFileName, DW...
0x004010ch
0x004010d1
               mov
                       edi, eax
0x004010d3
                       edi, edi
               test
0x004010d5
```

```
[0x004010d7]
0x004010d7
                     ecx, dword [nNumberOfBytesToWrite]
ayaa4a1ada
              push 0 ; LPOVERLAPPED lpOverlapped
0x004010dc
                     eax, [lpNumberOfBytesWritten]
              lea
                   eax ; LPDWORD lpNumberOfBytesWritten
0x004010df
              push
0x004010e0
              push ecx
                               ; DWORD nNumberOfBytesToWrite
              push ebx ; LPCVOID lpBuffer
0x004010e1
0x004010e2
              push
                     edi
                                ; HANDLE hFile
                     dword [WriteFile]; 0x40200c; BOOL WriteFile(HANDLE hFile, LPCVOID lpBuf...
0x004010e3
              test eax, eax
0x004010e9
0x004010eb
                     0x40113c
              je
```

1- **GetEnviromentalVariableA**: First it get the environment variable in which the resource would be unpacked to which is in AppData, and we see that there is a buffer:

call edi is telling the processor to jump to the address stored in the edi register, treating it as the starting address of a subroutine. The return address (the address of the instruction following the call edi instruction) is pushed onto the stack, allowing the program to return to that address after the subroutine completes.



2- WriteFile and CreateFile: This code is creating a file which is stage2.exe and save it in as seeing from string in C:/Users/Howl/AppData/Roaming.

createFile is used for creating or opening files, obtaining a handle to them, and setting up the necessary parameters. Once you have a file handle obtained through createFile, you can use WriteFile to write data to that file. WriteFile is specifically focused on the act of writing data, while CreateFile is focused on obtaining a handle to a file or creating/opening a file.

Then the result of the creation file is stored in eax then to edi and tested on a jump function. If the ZF is set Jump if equal is taken, and only ZF is set when the result of the writefunction is 0, then ZF set to 1 and then the program is exited by following the condition call and jumped to **0x40113c**.

If the ZF is not set then the program continuous to execute:

```
je 0x40113c
[0x004010ed]
                push
                                    ; HANDLE hObject
0x004010ed
                       edi
                        dword [CloseHandle] ; 0x402028 ; BOOL CloseHandle(HANDLE hObject)
0200401000
                call.
                      0x14
                push
                                   ; 20 ; DWORD dwMilliseconds
0x004010f4
                        0x004010f6
                call
                       0x44 ; 'D' ; 68
edx, [lpStartupInfo]
0x004010fc
                push
0x004010fe
                lea
0x00401101
                              ; int32_t arg_4h
                push
0x00401103
                                  : int32_t arg_ch
                        edx
                push
0x00401104
                        flirt.memset
                        dword [var_24h], 1
0x00401109
                or
0x0040110d
                add
                        esp, 0xc
                        ecx, [lpProcessInformation]
0x00401110
                lea
0x00401113
                                    ; LPPROCESS_INFORMATION lpProcessInformation
                push
                        ecx
                        edx, [lpStartupInfo]
0x00401114
                lea
                       edx ; LPSTARTUPINFOA lpStartupInfo
0x00401117
                push
                               ; LPSTARIUPINFUA IpStartupIr
; LPCSTR lpCurrentDirectory
; LPVOID lpEnvironment
; DWORD dwCreationFlags
; BOOL bInheritHandles
0x00401118
                push
0x0040111a
                push
0x0040111c
                push
0x0040111e
                push
                                  ; LPSECURITY_ATTRIBUTES lpThreadAttributes
0x00401120
                push
0x00401122
                                   ; LPSECURITY_ATTRIBUTES lpProcessAttributes
                push
0x00401124
                push
                                   ; LPSTR lpCommandLine
0x00401125
                mov
                        eax, 5
0x0040112a
                push
                                   ; LPCSTR lpApplicationName
                        esi
                mov
0x0040112b
                        dword [lpStartupInfo], 0x44; 'D'; 68
0x00401132
                       word [var_20h], ax
0x00401136
                                                 0x402018 ; BOOL CreateProcessA(LPCSTR lpApplicat...
                                    [0x0040113c]
                                     0x0040113c
                                                             edi
                                                     pop
```



```
[0x0040113d]
0x0040113d
                       ecx, dword [var_8h]
0x00401140
               pop
0x00401141
                       ecx, ebp
0x00401143
               pop
0x00401144
                        fcn.004011b3 ; fcn.004011b3
0x00401149
                       esp, ebp
0x0040114b
               pop
                       ebp
0x0040114c
```

- 1- It call flirt.memset
- 2- Create a process
- 3- Call a function to terminate any running functions.

Stage2.exe: Function 0x00401000:

```
[0x00401000]
;-- section..text: fcn.00401000();
; var int32_t var_410h @ stack - 0x410
; var int32_t var_40ch @ stack - 0x40c
; var int32_t var_408h @ stack - 0x408
; var int32_t var_407h @ stack - 0x407
; var int32_t var_8h @ stack - 0x8
0x00401000 push ebp
                                 ; [00] -r-x section size 4096 named .text
0x00401001
                        ebp, esp
0x00401003
                sub
                       esp, 0x40c
0x00401009
               mov
                       eax, dword section..data; 0x403000
0x0040100e
                       eax, ebp
0x00401010
                       dword [var_8h], eax
               mov
0x00401013
               push
0x00401014
               push
                       esi
0x00401015
                push
0x00401017
                push
0x00401019
                push
0x0040101b
                push
0x0040101d
                push
                       str.definitely_not_evil.com ; 0x4020a0
0x00401022
                call
                       dword [InternetOpenA] ; 0x402088
0x00401028
                       eax, eax
0x401140
                test
0x0040102a
               je
```



```
[0x004010ad]
0x004010ad
              sub
                     eax, edx
0x004010af
              push
                     eax
                     ecx, [var_408h]
0x004010b0
              lea
0x004010b6
              push
                     ecx
0x004010b7
              push
                     0x70
                              ; 'p' ; 112
0x004010b9
              push
                     str.Content_Type:_text_html_User_Agent:Mozilla_5.0__Windows_NT_6.1__Win64...
0x004010be
              push
0x004010bf
              call
                     dword [HttpSendRequestA] ; 0x402080
0x004010c5
              test
0x004010c7
                     0x401122
                [0x004010c9]
                 0x004010c9
                               mov
                                      ebx, dword InternetReadFile; 0x40207c
                 0x004010cf
                                      edx, [var_410h]
                               lea
                 0x004010d5
                               push
                 0x004010d6
                                      0xfe
                               push
                 0x004010db
                               push
                                      edi
                 0x004010dc
                               push
                                      esi
                 0x004010dd
                               mov
                                      dword [var_410h], 0
                 0x004010e7
                               call
                                      ebx
                 0x004010e9
                               test
                                      eax, eax
                 0x004010eb
                                      0x40111c
                               je
C++
BOOL InternetReadFile(
   [in] HINTERNET hFile,
   [out] LPVOID lpBuffer,
  [in] DWORD
                        dwNumberOfBytesToRead,
   [out] LPDWORD lpdwNumberOfBytesRead
);
```

In this function its open a connection to definitely_not_evil.com and its requesting an html page and then it reads the file and store it in ebx register and at the end it closes the handle, the result of the Read file function is saved into EAX



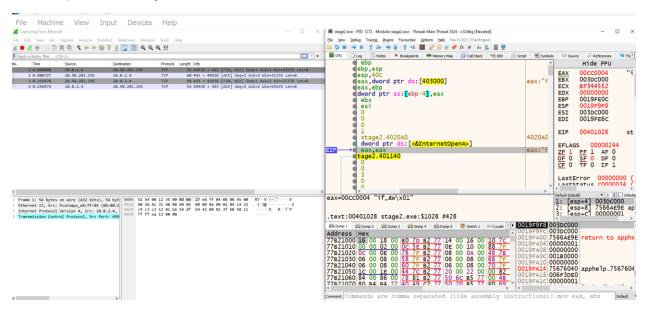
Advanced Dynamic Analysis

Running Stage2.exe in a debugger:

When reaching to the entry point, we saw a call to function 0x401000 and then we saw multiple comparison of the result of that function:

```
mov byte ptr ss:[ebp-104],0
call stage2.401000
cmp byte stage
                 C685 FCFEFFFF 00
  0040116F
  00401176
                 E8 85FEFFFF
                                             cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-104],6C
jne stage2.4012E6
  0040117B
                                                                                                  6c: '1'
                 80BD FCFEFFFF 6C
  00401182
                 OF85 5E010000
                                             cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-103],6D
jne stage2.4012E6
  00401188
                                                                                                  6D: 'm'
                 80BD FDFEFFFF 6D
  0040118F
                 0F85 51010000
                                             cmp byte ptr ss:
jne stage2.4012E
  00401195
                 80BD FEFEFFFF 61
                                                               ss:[ebp-102],61
                                                                                                  61: 'a'
  0040119C
                 0F85 44010000
                                             cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-101],6F
jne stage2.4012E6
004011A2
004011A9
004011AF
004011B5
                                                                                                  6F: 'o'
                 80BD FFFEFFF 6F
                 0F85 37010000
                 8B3D 60204000
                                             mov edi,dword ptr ds:[<&LoadIconA>]
                                                                                                  00402060:"`~ÌuÀ"
```

When entering 0x401000 function we saw it open connection and requestion definitely-not-evil.com/I00k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0





```
00401010
00401013
00401014
                         8945 FC
                                                              mov dword ptr ss: [ebp-4], eax
                                                             push esi
push 0
push 0
                         53
56
 00401014
Breakpoint Not Set 15
00401017
00401019
0040101B
0040101D
00401022
                         6A 00
6A 00
                                                             push 0
push 1
push 1
push stage2.4020A0
call dword ptr ds:[<&InternetOpenA>]
test eax,eax
                        6A 00
6A 01
68 A0204000
FF15 88204000
85C0
                                                                                                                                                    4020A0: "definitely-not-evil.com"
      00401022
00401028
                                                             je stage2.401140
push 0
push 0
push 3
   0040102A
00401030
00401032
00401034
                         0F84 10010000
                         6A 00
      00401034
00401036
                              03
                         6A 00
                                                              bush 0
                         6A 00
6A 50
68 A0204000
50
      00401038
0040103A
                                                              push 0
      0040103c
                                                              push stage2.4020A0
push eax
                                                                                                                                                    4020A0: "definitely-not-evil.com"
                                                              call dword ptr ds:[<&InternetConnectA>]
mov ehy eax
                         FF15 84204000
8RD8
   00401042
                                                               test ebx,ebx
je stage2.401148
push 0
push 80000000
                          85DB
0F84 F0000000
                          6A 00
68 00000080
                          6A 00
6A 00
                                                               push 0
push 0
                          6A 00
68 B8204000
68 D4204000
                                                               push 0
push stage2.4020B8
push stage2.4020D4
push ebx
                                                                                                                                                      4020B8:"100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0"
4020D4:"GET"
                                                               call dword ptr ds:[<&HttpOpenRequestA>]
    00401070
                           FF15 8C204000
       004010AF
004010B0
004010B6
004010B7
004010B9
                                                               lea ecx,dword ptr ss:[ebp-404]
                             8D8D FCFBFFFF
                                                               push ecx
push 70
push stage2.4020D8
                            6A 70
68 <u>D8204000</u>
56
                                                                                                                                               4020D8:"Content-Type: text/html\nUser-Agent: esi:"D.d"
                             FF15 80204000
                                                                call dword ptr ds:[<&HttpSendRequestA>]
         004010BF
                                                                     push 0
push stage2.4020B8
                                6A 00
                               68 B8204000
68 D4204000
                                                                                                                                                            4020B8: "100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0"
4020D4: "GET"
                                                                     push stage2.4020D4
push ebx
call dword ptr ds:[<ahref="mailto:khttpOpenRequesta">khttpOpenRequesta</a>]
mov esi, eax
test esi,esi
                                FF15 8C204000
                                85F6
                               0F84 A2000000
68 FF030000
04020B8 "100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0"
text:00401065 stage2.exe:$1065 #465
```

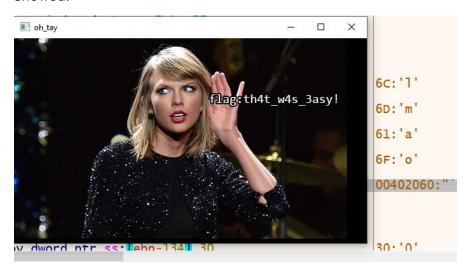
Open a connection to Definitely not evit.com then requesting /Look_what_you_made_me_do

```
00401176
                                              call stage2.401000
                 E8 85FEFFFF
                 80BD FCFEFFFF 6C
0F85 5E010000
                                              cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-104],6C
jne stage2.4012E6
■0040117B
                                                                                                                  6c: '1'
                                                               ss:[ebp-103],6D
00401188
                 80BD FDFEFFFF 6D
                                              cmp byte ptr
                                                                                                                  6D: 'm'
                                              jne stage2.4012E6
                 OF85 51010000
■ 0040118F
                                              ine stage2.4012E6
cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-102],61
jne stage2.4012E6
cmp byte ptr ss:[ebp-101],6F
                 80BD FEFEFFFF 61
                                                                                                                  61: 'a'
00401195
● 0040119C
                 0F85 44010000
                 80BD FFFEFFF 6F
004011A2
                                                                                                                  6F: 'o'
```

The HttpSendRequest function is typically used after HttpOpenRequest to actually send the HTTP request to the server.



Then it compares the result to "Imao", and if it's the same then the last message box is showed:

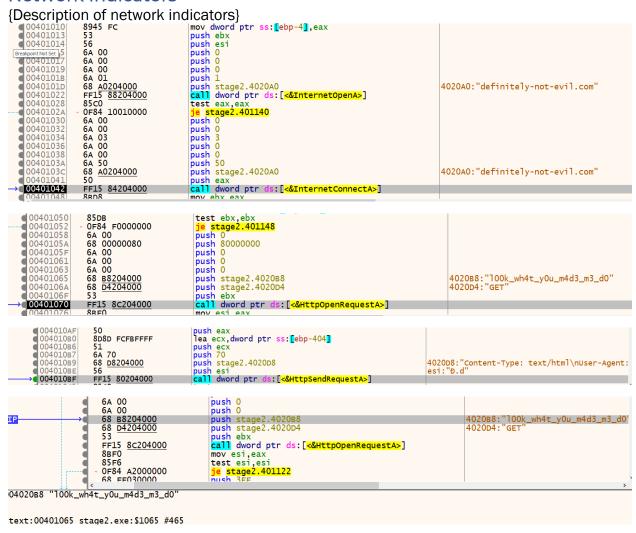




Indicators of Compromise

The full list of IOCs can be found in the Appendices.

Network Indicators

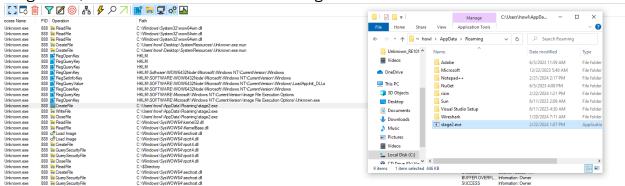


Using InternetConnectA, HttpOpenRegesrtA and HttpSendReguestA to definitely-not-evil.com



Host-based Indicators

Stage2.exe, this file is executed as second stage:





Appendices

A. Yara Rules

```
rule YARA_example {
   meta:
        description = "Unknown_RE1012018"
        sha256 =
"92730427321A1C4CCFC0D0580834DAEF98121EFA9BB8963DA332BFD6CF1FDA8A"
   strings:
       $string1="hflagh{i_shtay_hout_htoo_hlateh_goth_nothhingh_in_hmy_bhrainj}"
ascii
        $string2 = "Im totally malware" ascii
        $string3="Dimmaletyoufinishbut" ascii
        $string4="stage2.exe" ascii
        $URL1="definitely-not-evil.com" ascii
        $URL2="100k_wh4t_y0u_m4d3_m3_d0" ascii
        $IS_PE_FILE="MZ"ascii
   condition:
        $IS PE FILE at 0 and
        ($string1 and $string2 and $string3 and $string4 ) or ($URL1 or $URL2)
```

B. Callback URLs

Domain	Port
definitely-not-evil.com	80