

HARA KIRIN

**DISSECTING THE PRIVILEGED
COMPONENTS OF HUAWEI MOBILE DEVICES**

```
v8 = v3;
if (v8 >= 0x10) {
    if ((v8 >= 0x10) && (v8 <= 0x10)) {
        v8 = 0x10;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x11) && (v8 <= 0x11)) {
        v8 = 0x11;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x12) && (v8 <= 0x12)) {
        v8 = 0x12;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x13) && (v8 <= 0x13)) {
        v8 = 0x13;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x14) && (v8 <= 0x14)) {
        v8 = 0x14;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x15) && (v8 <= 0x15)) {
        v8 = 0x15;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x16) && (v8 <= 0x16)) {
        v8 = 0x16;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x17) && (v8 <= 0x17)) {
        v8 = 0x17;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x18) && (v8 <= 0x18)) {
        v8 = 0x18;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x19) && (v8 <= 0x19)) {
        v8 = 0x19;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1A) && (v8 <= 0x1A)) {
        v8 = 0x1A;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1B) && (v8 <= 0x1B)) {
        v8 = 0x1B;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1C) && (v8 <= 0x1C)) {
        v8 = 0x1C;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1D) && (v8 <= 0x1D)) {
        v8 = 0x1D;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1E) && (v8 <= 0x1E)) {
        v8 = 0x1E;
    }
    if ((v8 >= 0x1F) && (v8 <= 0x1F)) {
        v8 = 0x1F;
    }
}
```

else {

v8 = 0x10;

}

if (v8 >= 0x10) {

v8 = 0x10;

}

if (v8 >= 0x11) {

v8 = 0x11;

}

if (v8 >= 0x12) {

v8 = 0x12;

}

if (v8 >= 0x13) {

v8 = 0x13;

}

if (v8 >= 0x14) {

v8 = 0x14;

}

if (v8 >= 0x15) {

v8 = 0x15;

}

if (v8 >= 0x16) {

v8 = 0x16;

}

if (v8 >= 0x17) {

v8 = 0x17;

}

if (v8 >= 0x18) {

v8 = 0x18;

}

if (v8 >= 0x19) {

v8 = 0x19;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1A) {

v8 = 0x1A;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1B) {

v8 = 0x1B;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1C) {

v8 = 0x1C;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1D) {

v8 = 0x1D;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1E) {

v8 = 0x1E;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1F) {

v8 = 0x1F;

}

else {

v8 = 0x10;

}

}

if (v8 >= 0x10) {

v8 = 0x10;

}

if (v8 >= 0x11) {

v8 = 0x11;

}

if (v8 >= 0x12) {

v8 = 0x12;

}

if (v8 >= 0x13) {

v8 = 0x13;

}

if (v8 >= 0x14) {

v8 = 0x14;

}

if (v8 >= 0x15) {

v8 = 0x15;

}

if (v8 >= 0x16) {

v8 = 0x16;

}

if (v8 >= 0x17) {

v8 = 0x17;

}

if (v8 >= 0x18) {

v8 = 0x18;

}

if (v8 >= 0x19) {

v8 = 0x19;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1A) {

v8 = 0x1A;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1B) {

v8 = 0x1B;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1C) {

v8 = 0x1C;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1D) {

v8 = 0x1D;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1E) {

v8 = 0x1E;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1F) {

v8 = 0x1F;

}

else {

v8 = 0x10;

}

}

if (v8 >= 0x10) {

v8 = 0x10;

}

if (v8 >= 0x11) {

v8 = 0x11;

}

if (v8 >= 0x12) {

v8 = 0x12;

}

if (v8 >= 0x13) {

v8 = 0x13;

}

if (v8 >= 0x14) {

v8 = 0x14;

}

if (v8 >= 0x15) {

v8 = 0x15;

}

if (v8 >= 0x16) {

v8 = 0x16;

}

if (v8 >= 0x17) {

v8 = 0x17;

}

if (v8 >= 0x18) {

v8 = 0x18;

}

if (v8 >= 0x19) {

v8 = 0x19;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1A) {

v8 = 0x1A;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1B) {

v8 = 0x1B;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1C) {

v8 = 0x1C;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1D) {

v8 = 0x1D;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1E) {

v8 = 0x1E;

}

if (v8 >= 0x1F) {

v8 = 0x1F;

}

else {

v8 = 0x10;

}

}

if (v8 >= 0x10) {

v8 = 0x10;

}

if (v8 >= 0x11) {

v8 = 0x11;

}

About Us



Maxime Peterlin – @lyte_
Security researcher & Co-founder



Alexandre Adamski – @NeatMonster_
Security researcher & Co-founder



Impalabs

Impalabs – @the_impalabs
French offensive security company
Reverse engineering, vulnerability research, exploit development

Website – <https://impalabs.com>
Blog – <https://blog.impalabs.com>

Outline

Introduction

Bootchain

Hypervisor

Secure Monitor

Secure Kernel

Trusted OS

Trusted Applications

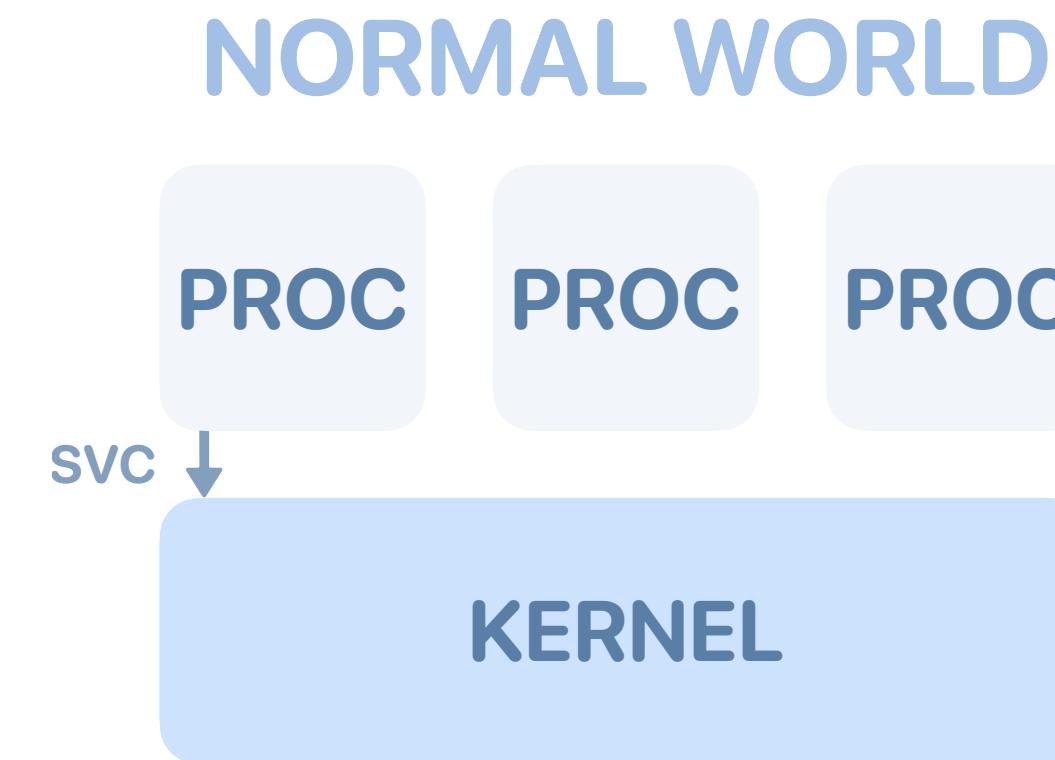
Conclusion

Introduction

Android Device Architecture

Kernel-Based Security

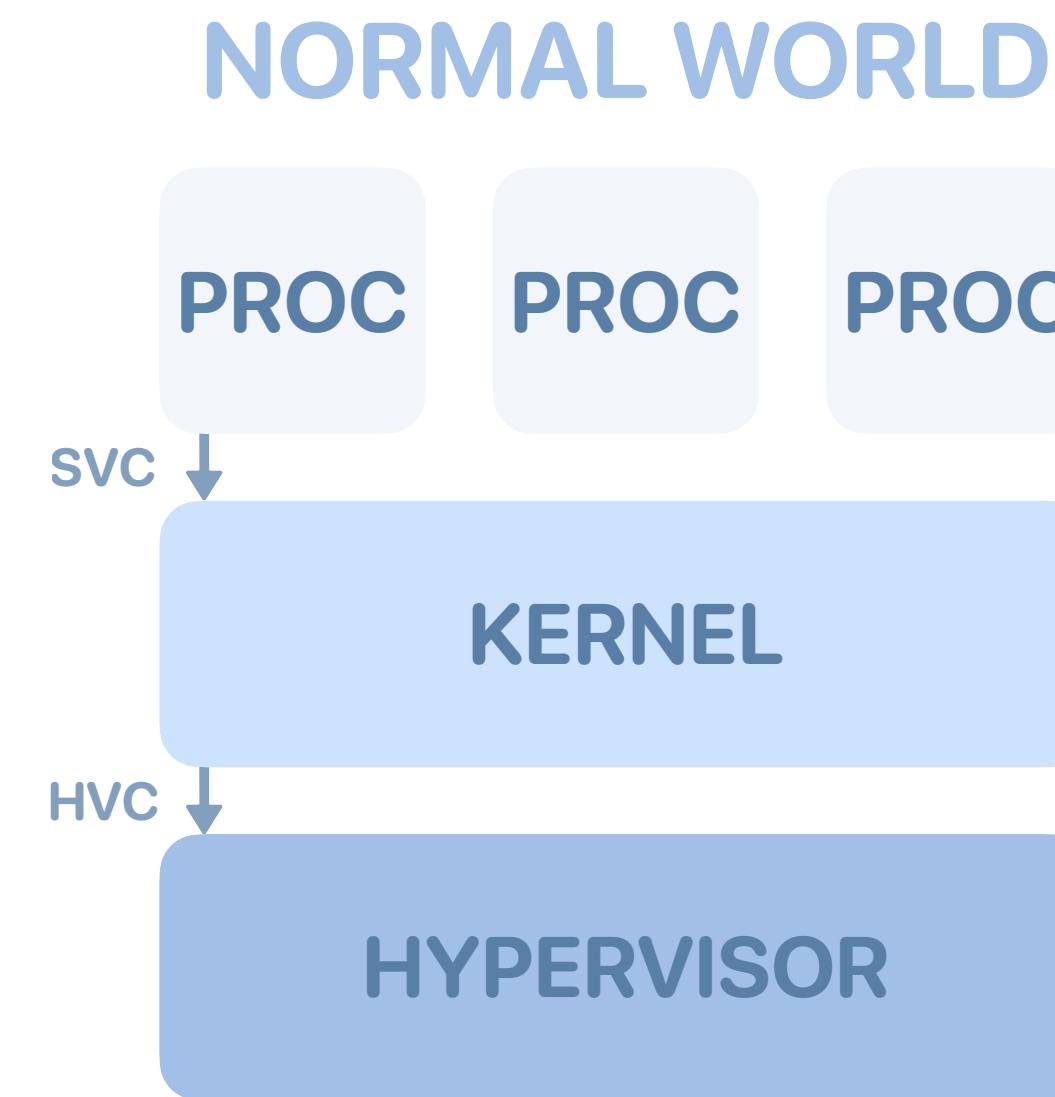
- ▶ **Access control** to resources from user space is enforced by the kernel
 - Address space isolation
 - Preemptive multitasking
 - Peripherals access restriction
- ▶ **Single point of failure**
 - Breaching kernel defenses results in full system compromise



Android Device Architecture

Security Hypervisor

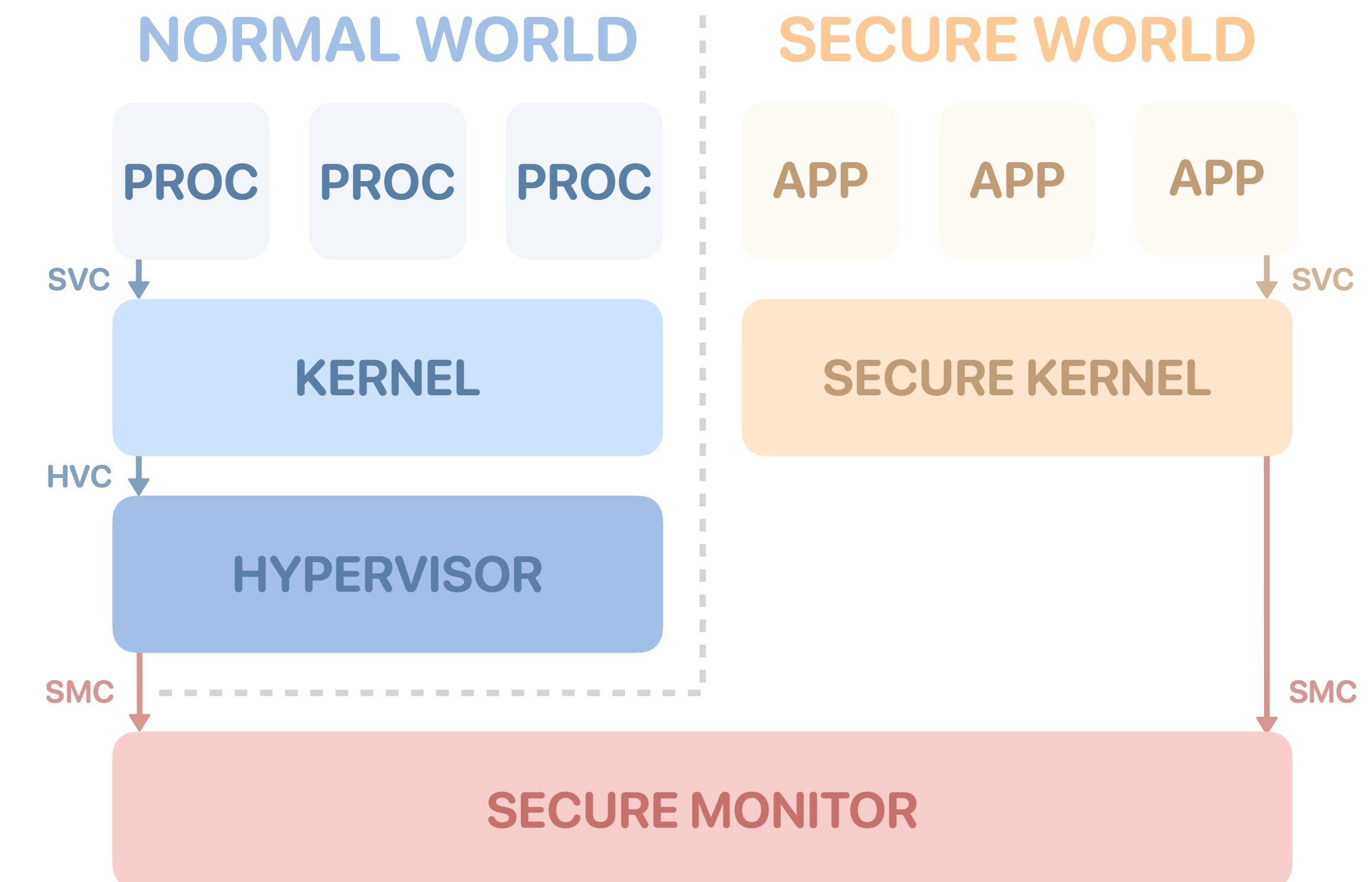
- ▶ **CPU virtualization**
 - Traditionally used to execute multiple operating systems in parallel on the same device
 - Leveraged on Android devices to enhance system security instead
- ▶ **ARM virtualization extensions**
 - Additional privilege level
 - Memory access restrictions
 - Exceptions interception
- ▶ Protects **critical data structures** at run time
 - Credentials, security contexts, page tables, etc.



Android Device Architecture

TrustZone for Cortex-A

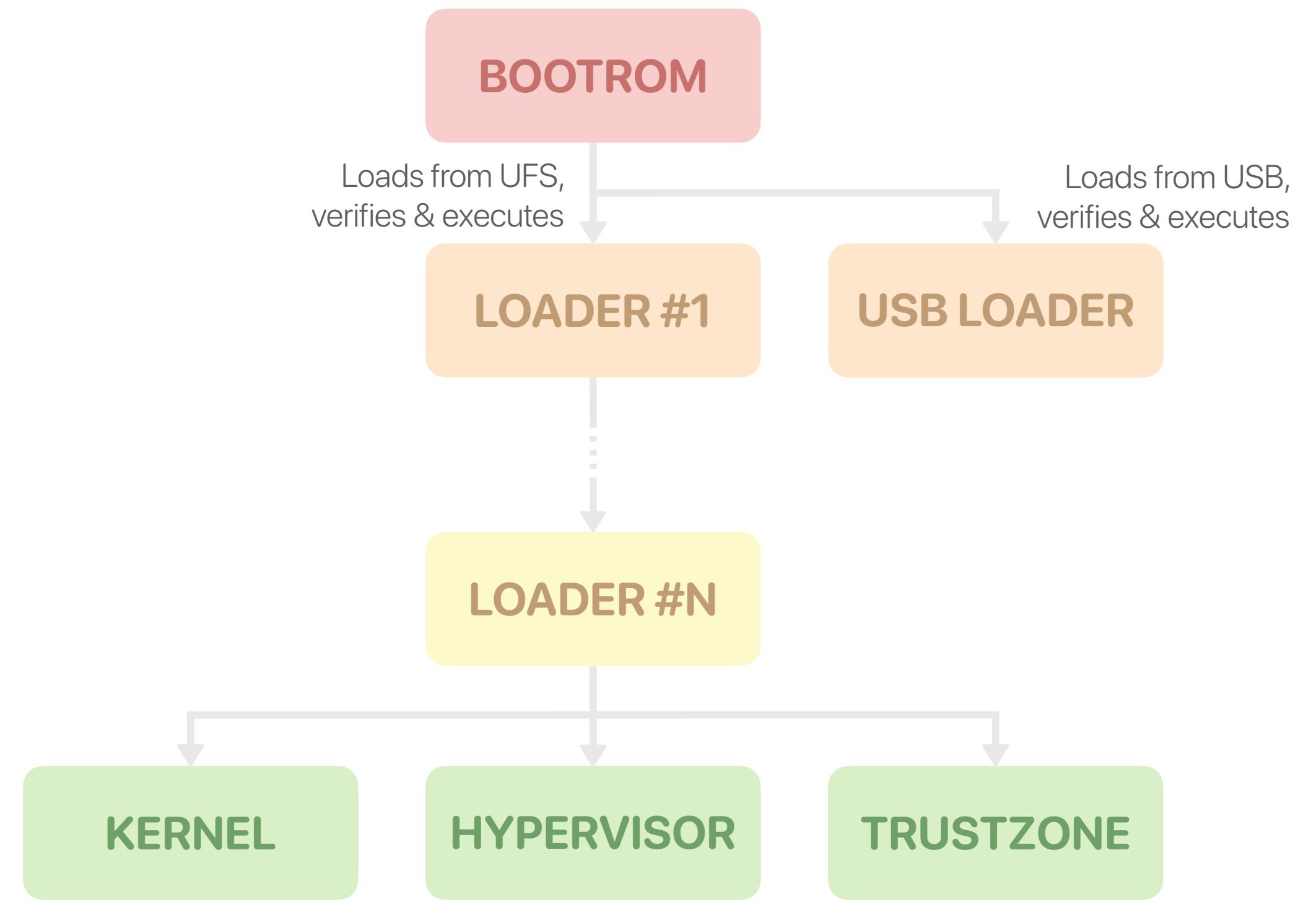
- ▶ System-wide **hardware separation**
 - An untrusted **Normal World** and a trusted **Secure World**
 - Access to secure hardware resources from non-secure software is prohibited
 - Inter-world communications through the **Secure Monitor**
- ▶ TrustZone and Secure Boot are used to create a **Trusted Execution Environment (TEE)**
 - Authentication (e.g. for encrypted filesystem)
 - Mobile payment, secrets management, etc.
 - Content management (DRM)



Android Device Architecture

Secure Boot

- ▶ Each stage **cryptographically checks** that the next image is authorized to run
 - Creates a *chain of trust*
 - Starting from the *root of trust*, an **immutable component**
- ▶ Prevents unauthorized or modified software from executing on the device
- ▶ OEMs implement **additional features**
 - Anti-rollback mechanism
 - Emergency boot over USB
 - Boot images encryption





Boot Chain

Boot Chain

Overview

► Security mechanisms

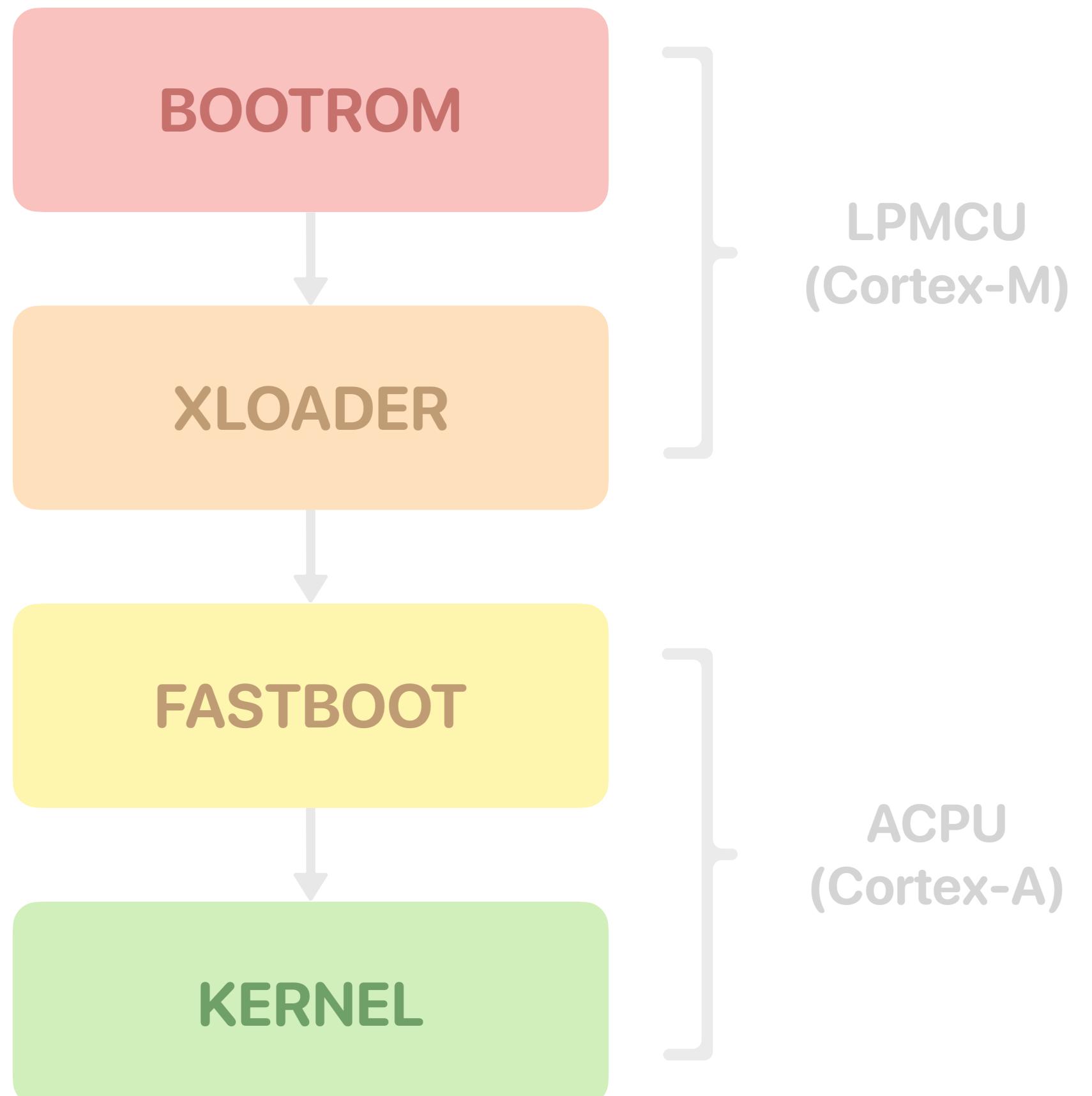
- **Secure boot:** prevents replacing or modifying boot chain images
- **Bootloader lock:** prevents reflashing the partitions or running a custom kernel

► Bootstrapping challenges

- All critical partitions are **encrypted**
- Can't talk directly to targeted components
- Countermeasures in kernel and userland

► Getting control over the boot chain

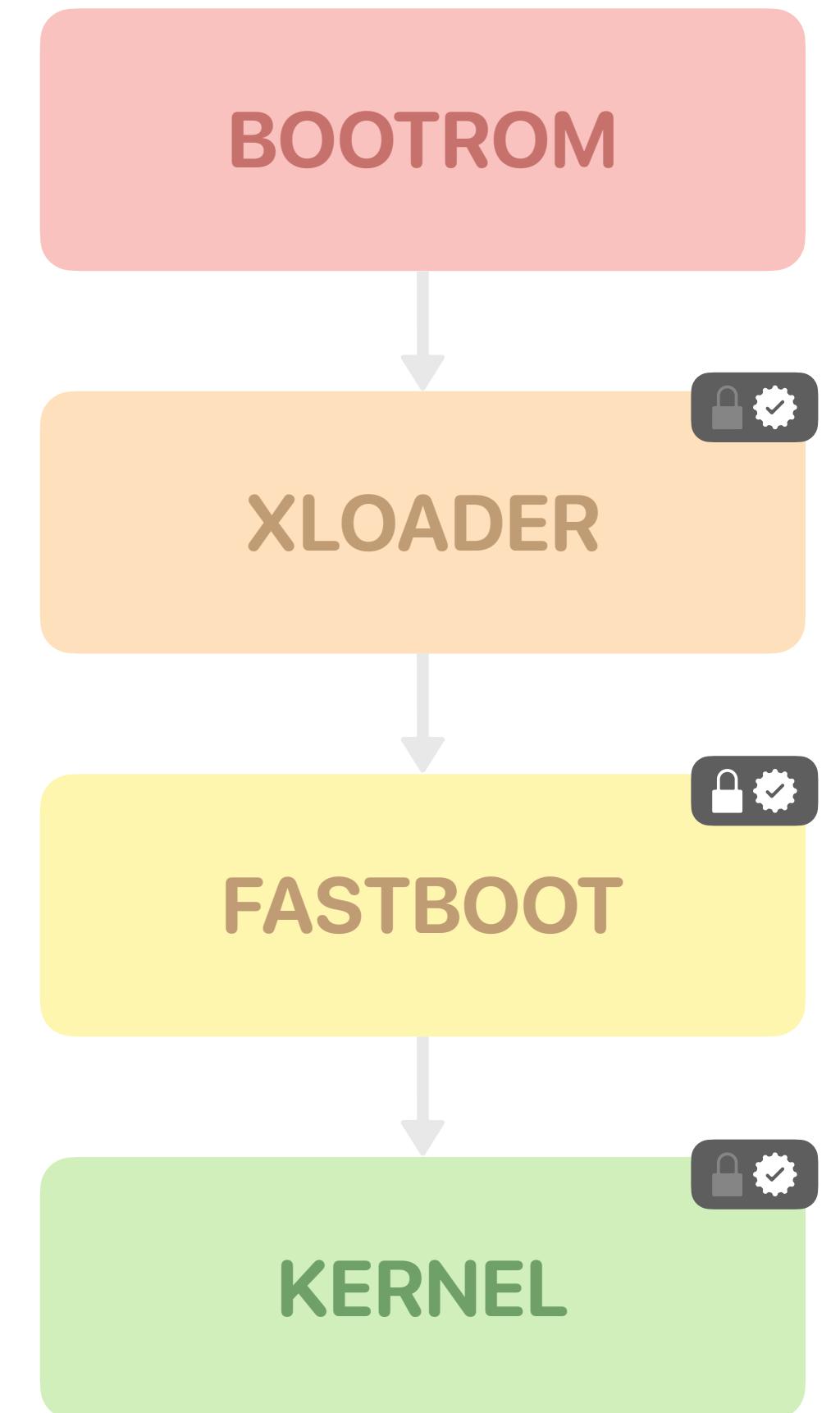
- High entry cost: we need to find a **vulnerability** first



Boot Chain

First Research Device

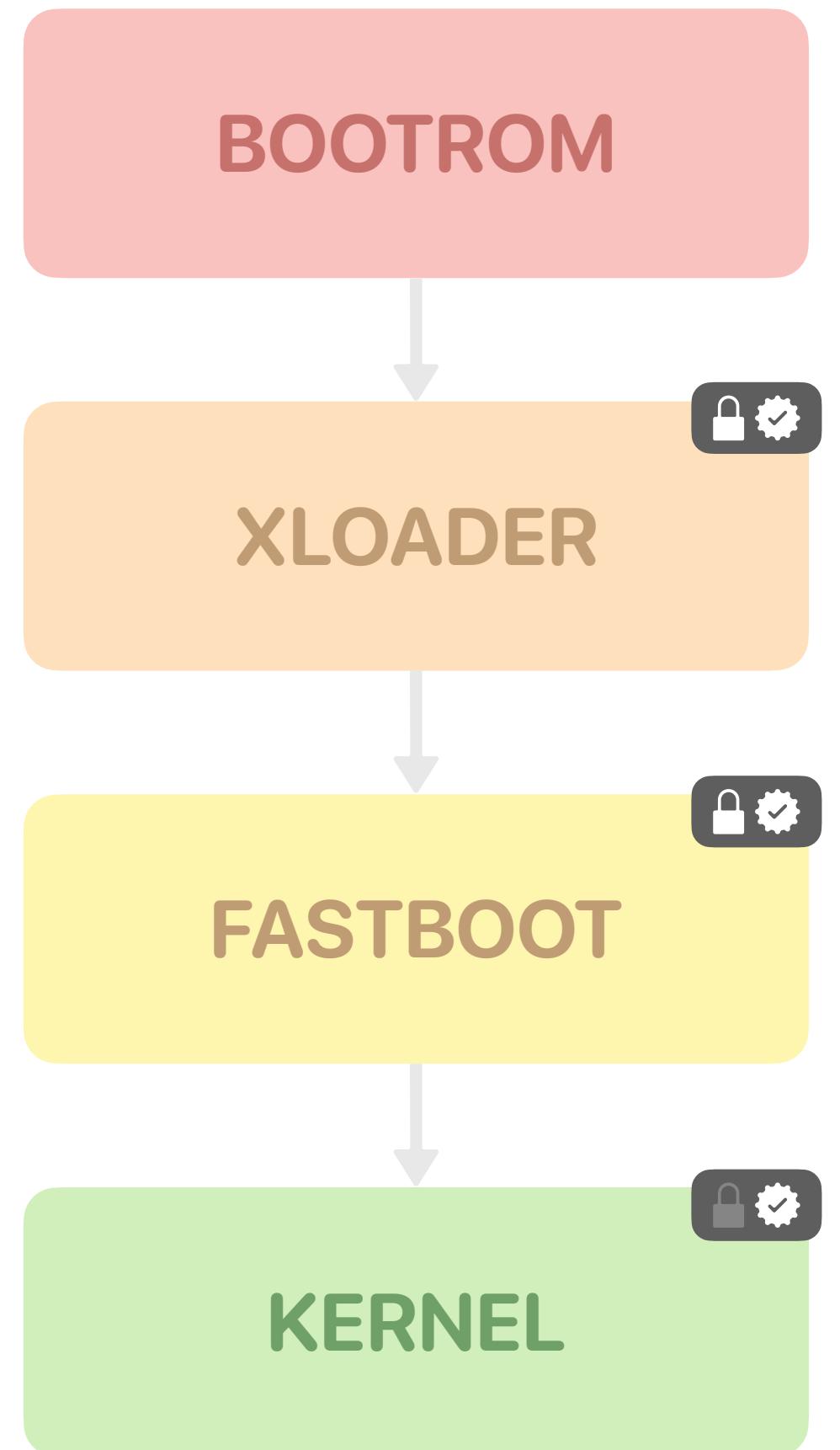
- ▶ P30 Lite (Kirin 710 chipset)
 - Xloader is **signed** but **not encrypted**, thus can be retrieved from a firmware update
 - Found a **vulnerability** in its implementation of *xmodem*, the USB recovery protocol
 - The next stage binary's base address is **not verified**
 - Can be leveraged to modify Xloader itself (all memory is RWX)
 - Shorting a **test point** on the device activates the download mode feature



Boot Chain

Second Research Device

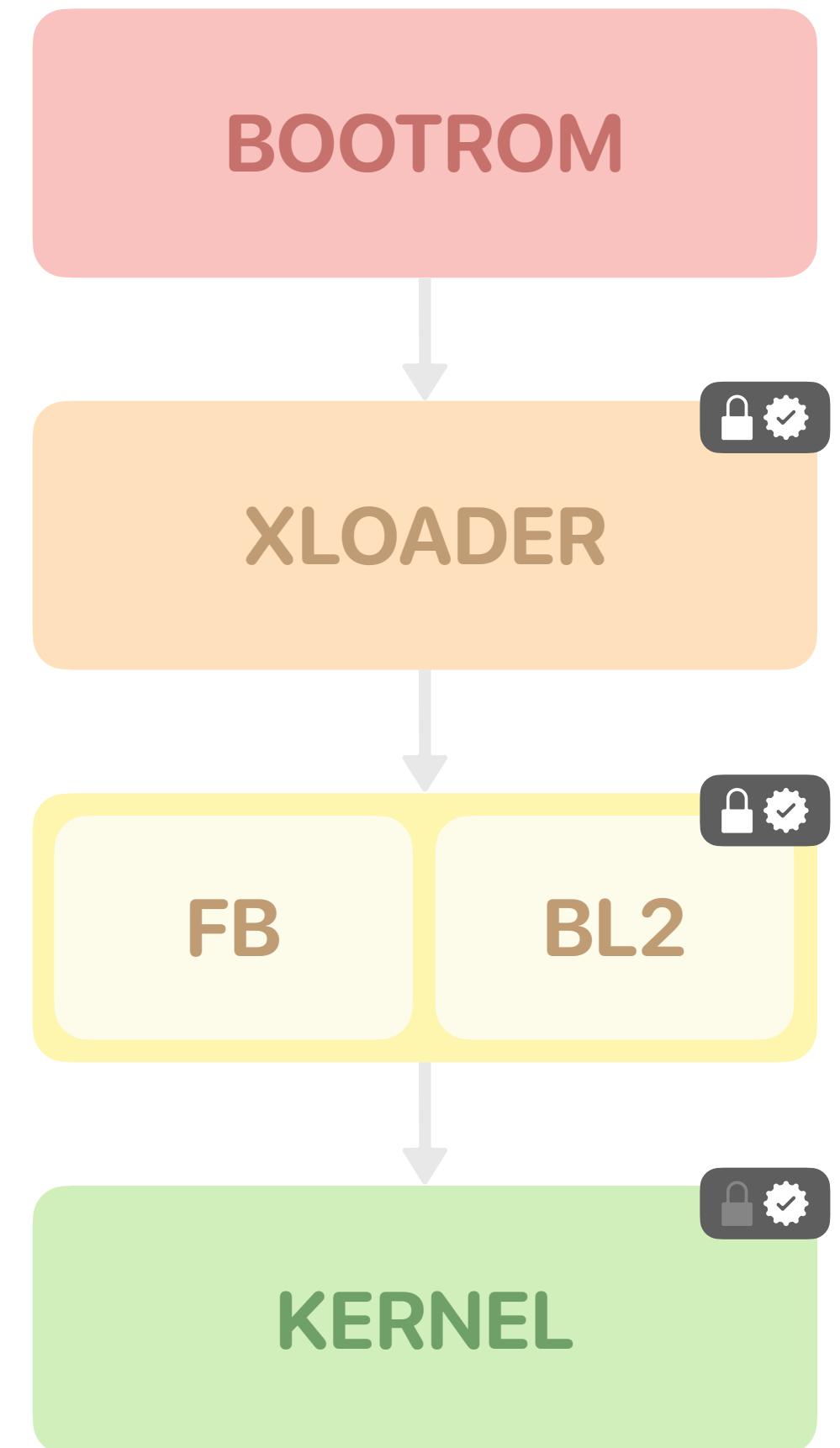
- ▶ P40 Lite (Kirin 810 chipset)
 - Xloader is **signed** and **encrypted**
 - But it is also affected by the *xmodem* vulnerability that needs to be exploited **blindly**
 - Decryption key no longer stored in fuses and is only accessible to the **crypto engine**
 - Firmware images are retrieved by using the device as an **oracle**



Boot Chain

Third Research Device

- ▶ **P40 Pro** (Kirin 990 chipset)
 - Xloader is **signed, encrypted**, but **not vulnerable** to the *xmodem* bug
 - Fastboot is **split** into a privileged and an unprivileged component
 - **Another vulnerability** is needed to get control over the boot chain



Boot Chain

How to Tame Your Unicorn

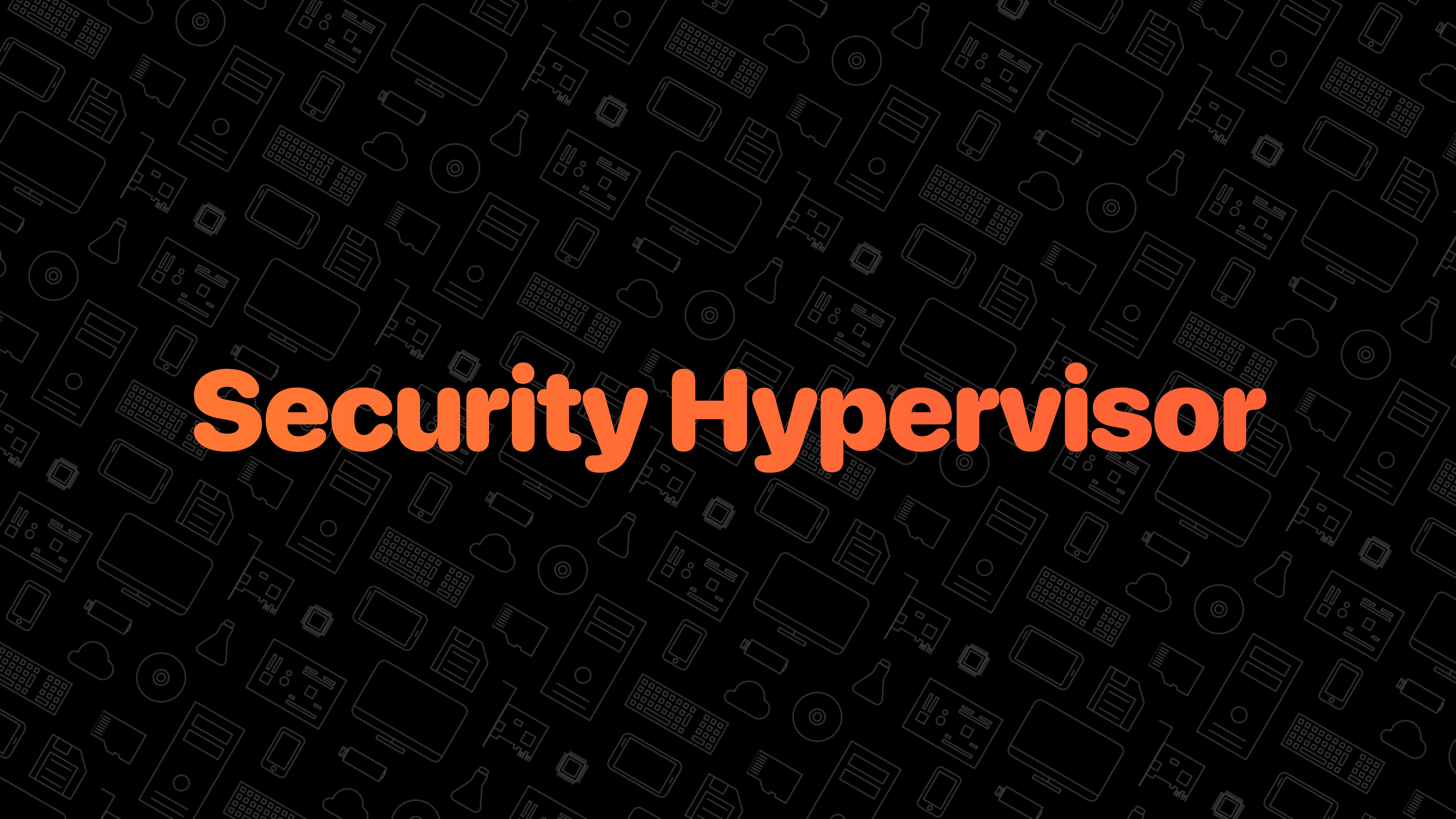
- ▶ Talk presented at *BlackHat USA 2021* by **Taszk Security Labs**
 - Revealed multiple Xloader and BootROM bugs
 - Including the Xloader vulnerability that we had discovered
- ▶ **CVE-2021-22434**: Head Chunk Resend State Machine Confusion
 - Internal state is not reset when sending an incorrect payload address
 - **BootROM** code execution can be achieved from this **arbitrary write primitive**
 - Must be exploited **blindly** on the Kirin 990 chipset
 - Dump Xloader using the *Flash Patch and Breakpoint* unit of the LPMCU
- ▶ Huawei “fixed” the BootROM bugs by burning a fuse to disable the USB recovery mode

Boot Chain

Continuation of Execution



- ▶ Similarly to "CHECKM30" presented at MOSEC 2021 by **Pangu Team**

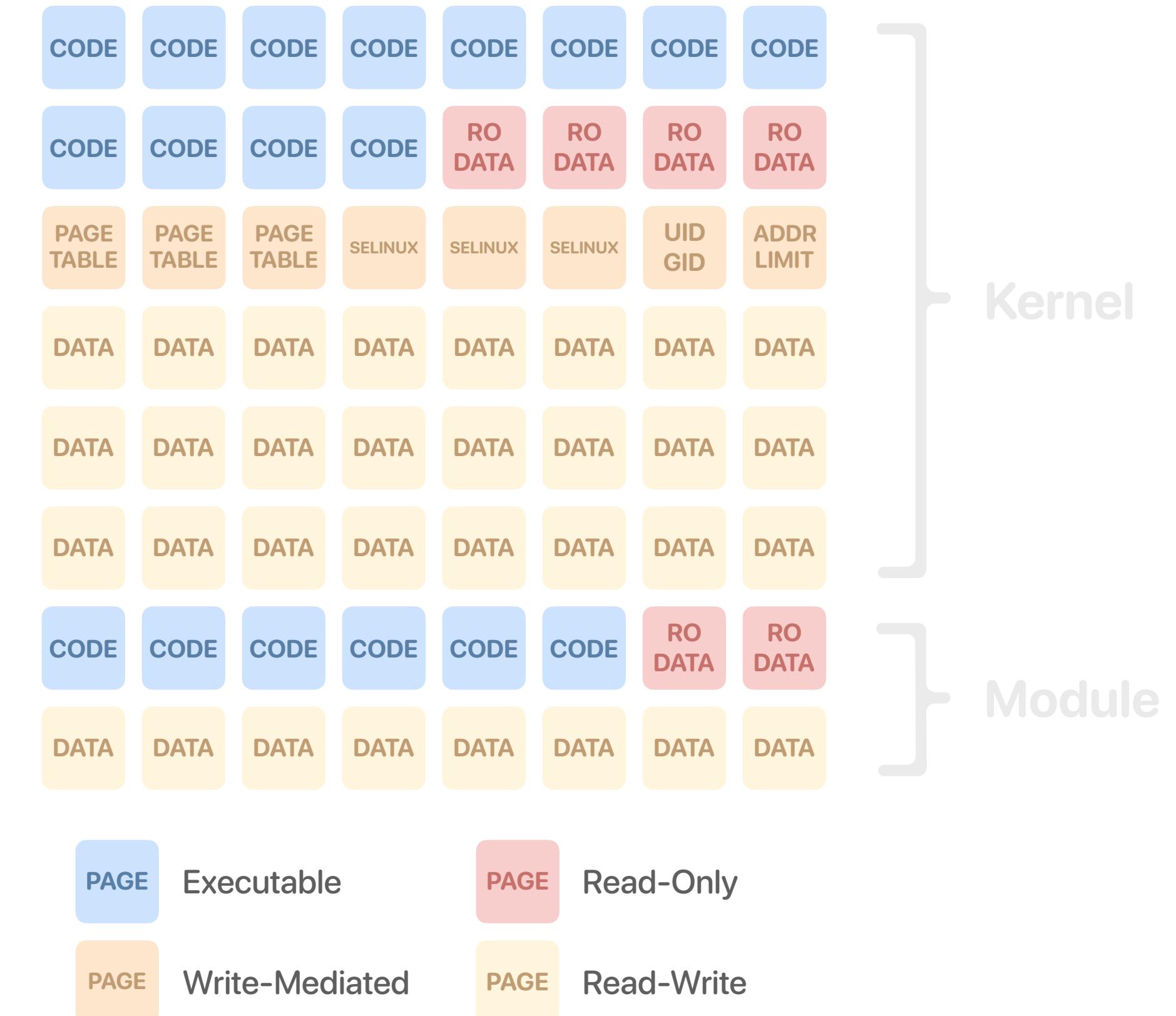


Security Hypervisor

Security Hypervisor

Introduction

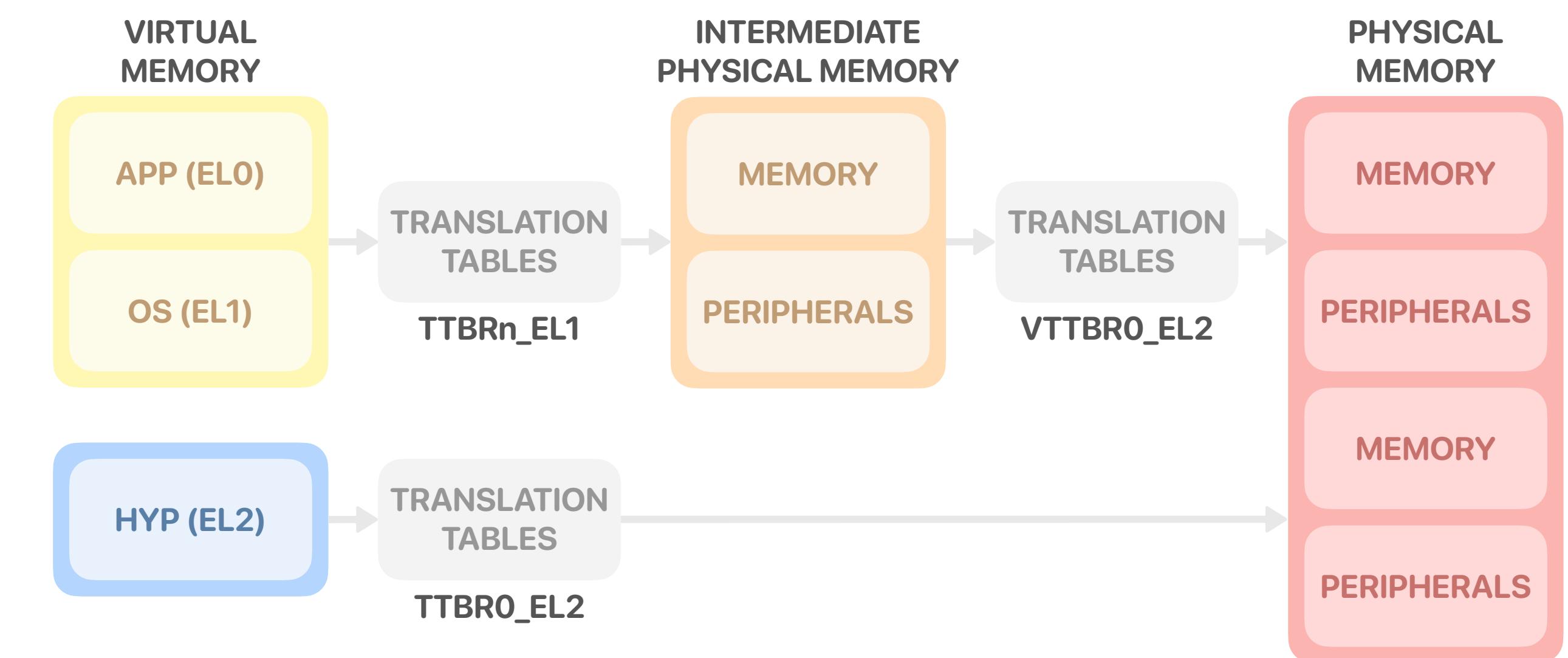
- ▶ Called **Huawei Hypervisor Execution Environment (HHEE)**
 - Similar to **uH/RKP** on Samsung's Exynos or **QHEE** on Qualcomm's Snapdragon
- ▶ **Main Security Features**
 - Prevents arbitrary changes to the kernel read-only data, its page tables, SELinux structures, etc.
 - Keeps a read-only copy of tasks' information to detect **privilege escalation** on the next syscall or file access
 - Ensures only the pages belonging to the **kernel** and **modules** code segment can be executed at EL1
 - Makes critical physical memory regions (e.g. sensorhub, secure npu, modem, etc.) inaccessible to EL0 and EL1
 - Enables **execute-only** user space memory that is unreadable from the kernel



Security Hypervisor

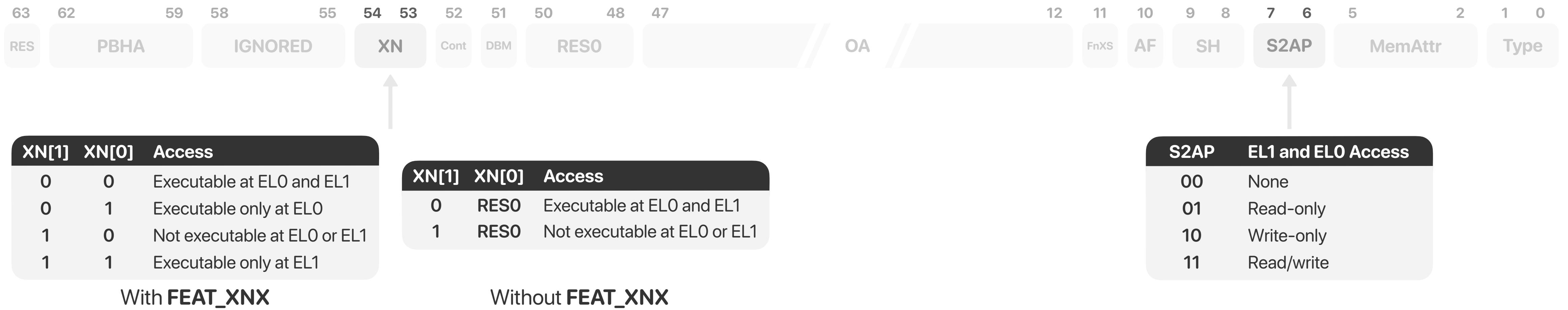
Second Stage of Address Translation

- ▶ Virtual address translation is extended with a **second stage**
 - The VA is first translated into an *Intermediate Physical Address*
 - The IPA is then translated into a PA
- ▶ It uses a second set of page tables under the control of the hypervisor
 - These page tables can apply **additional access control**
- ▶ The hypervisor also has its own page tables for its virtual address space



Security Hypervisor

Second Stage Limitations



- ▶ Stage 2 permissions **cannot distinguish** between EL0 and EL1 for:
 - Read and write accesses
 - Executability, if *FEAT_XNX* is not implemented
- ▶ It is the main reason stage 1 page tables also need to be **controlled** by the hypervisor

Security Hypervisor

Kernel Page Tables

► Initial processing

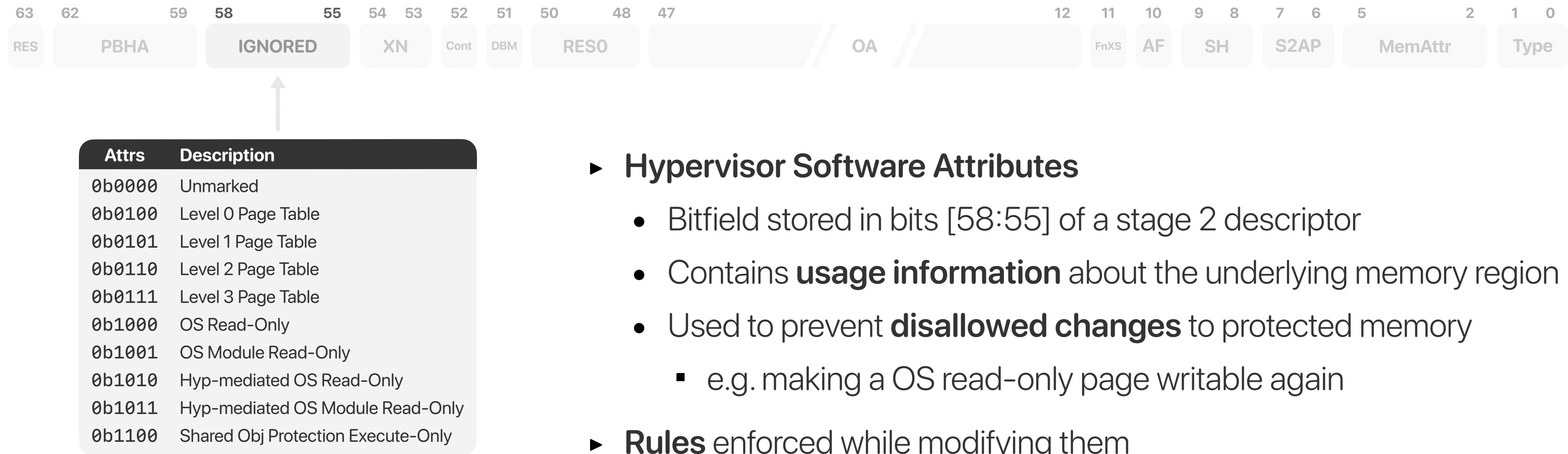
- Traps changes made to the *TTBR1_EL1* and *SCTRL_EL1* system registers
- Performs a page table walk and ensures every descriptor is sane and coherent
 - e.g. descriptors with the contiguous bit set actually point to contiguous memory
- Enforces **EL0/EL1 distinction** for read-write accesses and executability
 - By default, kernel pages are set non executable at EL1 and non accessible at EL0

► Changes monitoring

- Kernel page tables are set as **read-only** in the second stage
 - Except when permissions can be enforced at previous table level (PXNTable/APTable)
- A **write** to a stage 1 descriptor or a **translation fault** during a page table walk raises an exception
 - Handled by the hypervisor to ensure modifications are permitted and update stage 2 accordingly

Security Hypervisor

Software Attributes



- ▶ **Hypervisor Software Attributes**
 - Bitfield stored in bits [58:55] of a stage 2 descriptor
 - Contains **usage information** about the underlying memory region
 - Used to prevent **disallowed changes** to protected memory
 - e.g. making a OS read-only page writable again
 - ▶ **Rules** enforced while modifying them
 - Only **unmarked** descriptors can be marked
 - To unmark a descriptor, the **current marking** must be provided

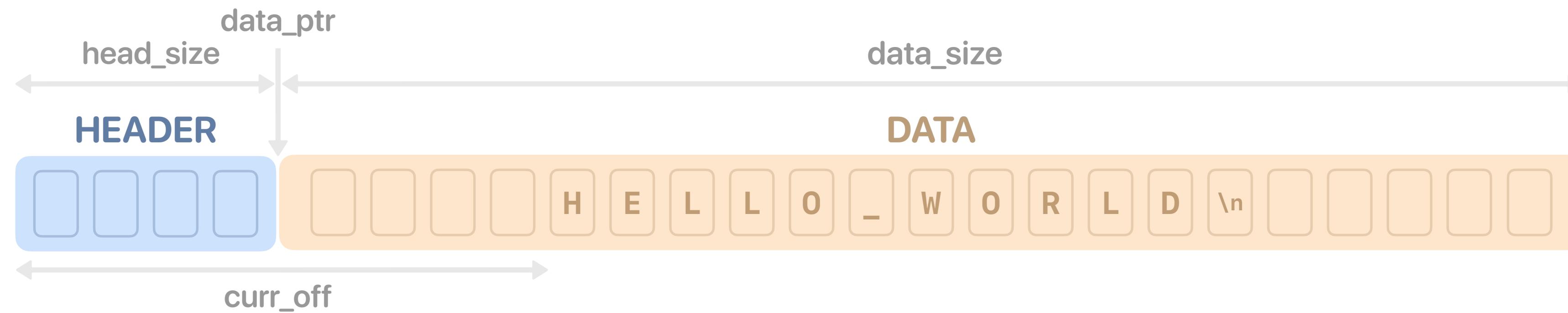
Security Hypervisor

Methodology

- ▶ Extensive **reverse engineering**
 - **Static analysis**
 - 68 KB raw binary
 - AArch64 code
 - 295 functions
 - No symbols
 - ~10 log strings
 - Analysis can be augmented with information coming from external sources
 - HVC names from the kernel source code
 - *Armv8-A Architecture Reference Manual*
- ▶ Identifying the **attack surface**
 - HVC and SMC handlers
 - Faulting memory accesses
 - Trapped system registers accesses
 - e.g. *SCTRLR_EL1*, *TCR_EL1*, etc.
 - Memory shared with the kernel
- ▶ **Comparing** the security hypervisors of different OEMs might highlight implementation flaws

Security Hypervisor

Vulnerability

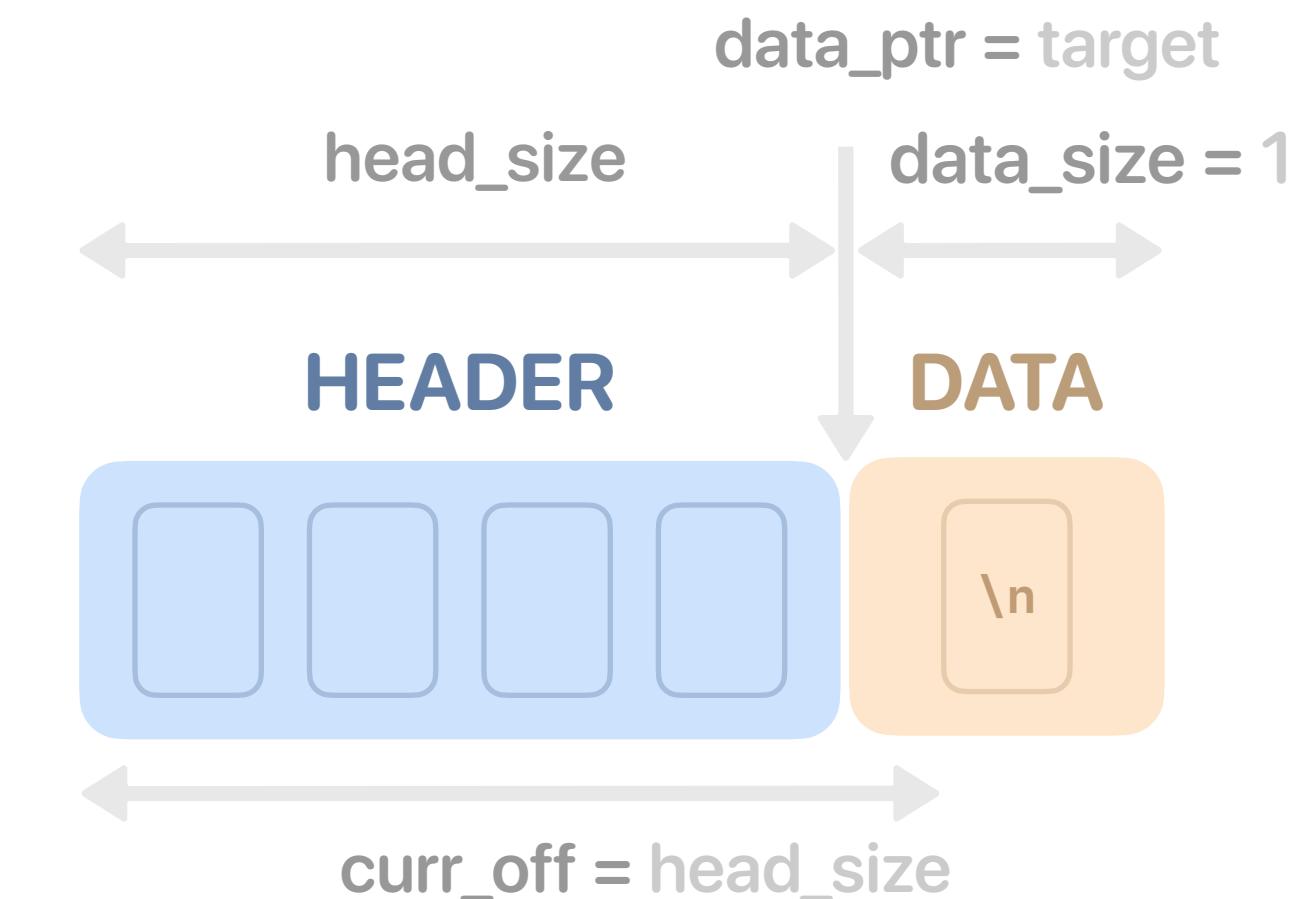


- ▶ **CVE-2021-39979**
 - Logging system use a control structure located in **shared memory** that is accessible to the kernel
 - Pointer, offset and sizes fields are all **unchecked**
 - We can **write log strings** at any virtual address that is mapped into the hypervisor

Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

- ▶ **Constrained write primitive**
 - The log string being written is **not user-controlled**
 - Since the buffer is **circular** and written character by character
 - Only the **last byte** will remain in memory if we set the data size of the buffer to 1
 - It's always the **new line** character: \n (0xA)



- ▶ **Linear heap allocator**
 - Heap region has a fixed base address and size
 - The current offset is stored in a **global variable**
 - The allocation function **assumes** the offset value is sane (smaller than the heap size)
 - If it isn't, an integer underflow happens and the allocator returns out-of-bounds memory
 - Right after the heap is a **kernel-accessible** region

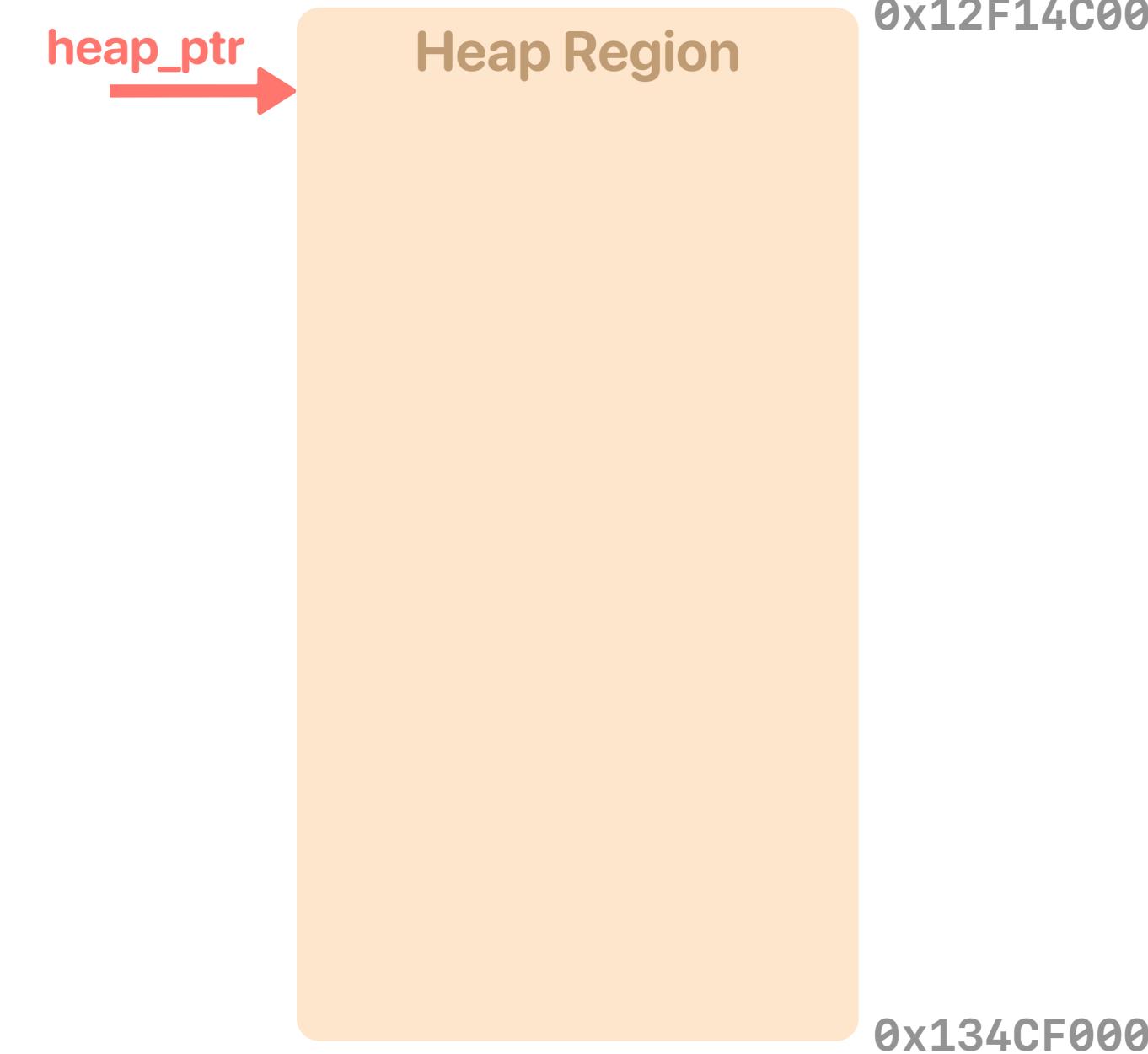
```
void malloc(uint64_t size) {
    if (HEAP_SIZE - heap_off < pad + size)
        return 0;
    heap_off += pad + size;
    return HEAP_ADDR + heap_off + pad;
}
```

Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

- ▶ Getting code execution

Global Variables	
heap_off	0x00000000
remaining	0x005BA400

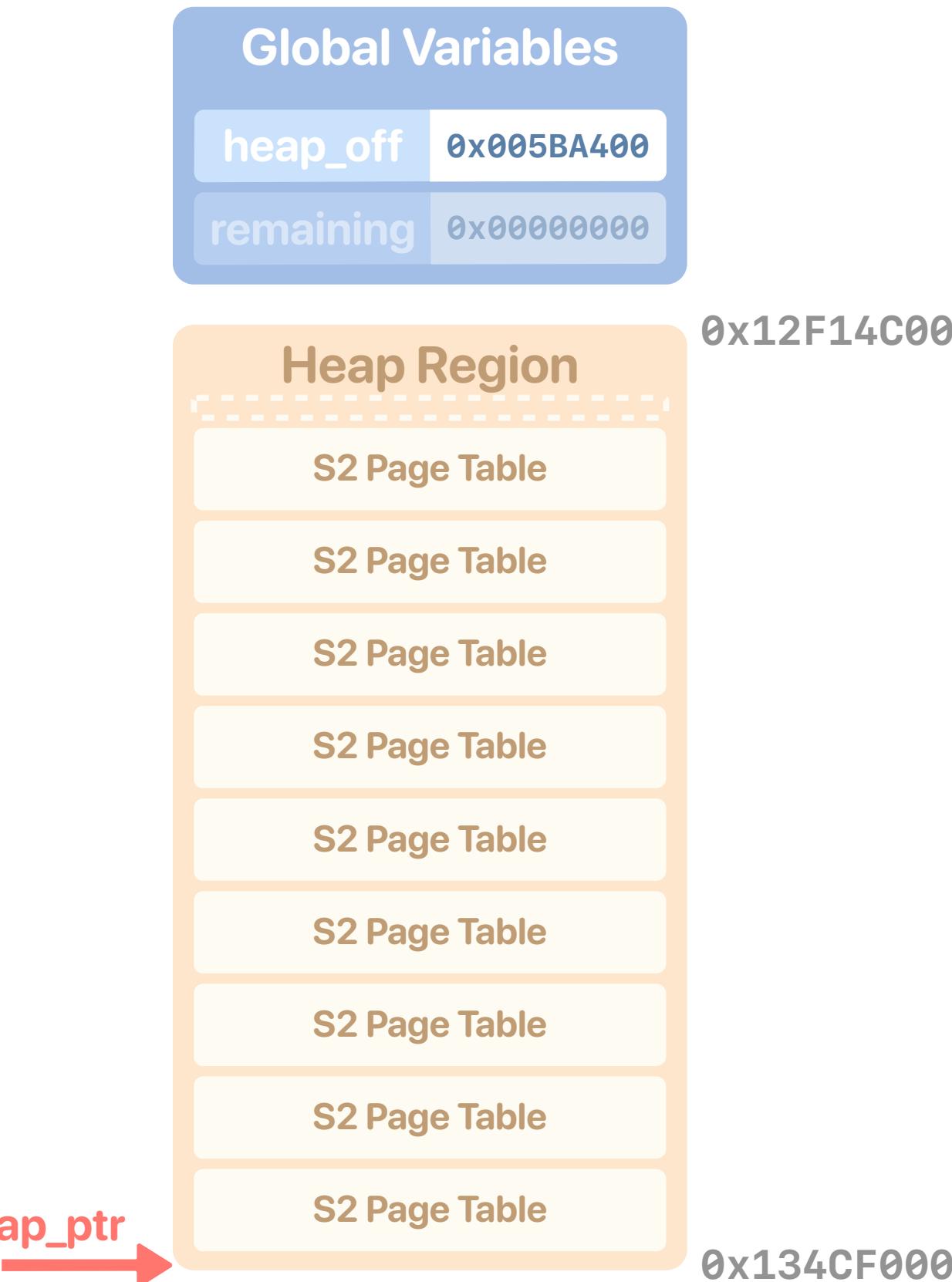


Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

▶ Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations



Security Hypervisor Exploitation

▶ Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations
 - **Step 2:** Use the constrained write primitive to move the offset right past the end of heap

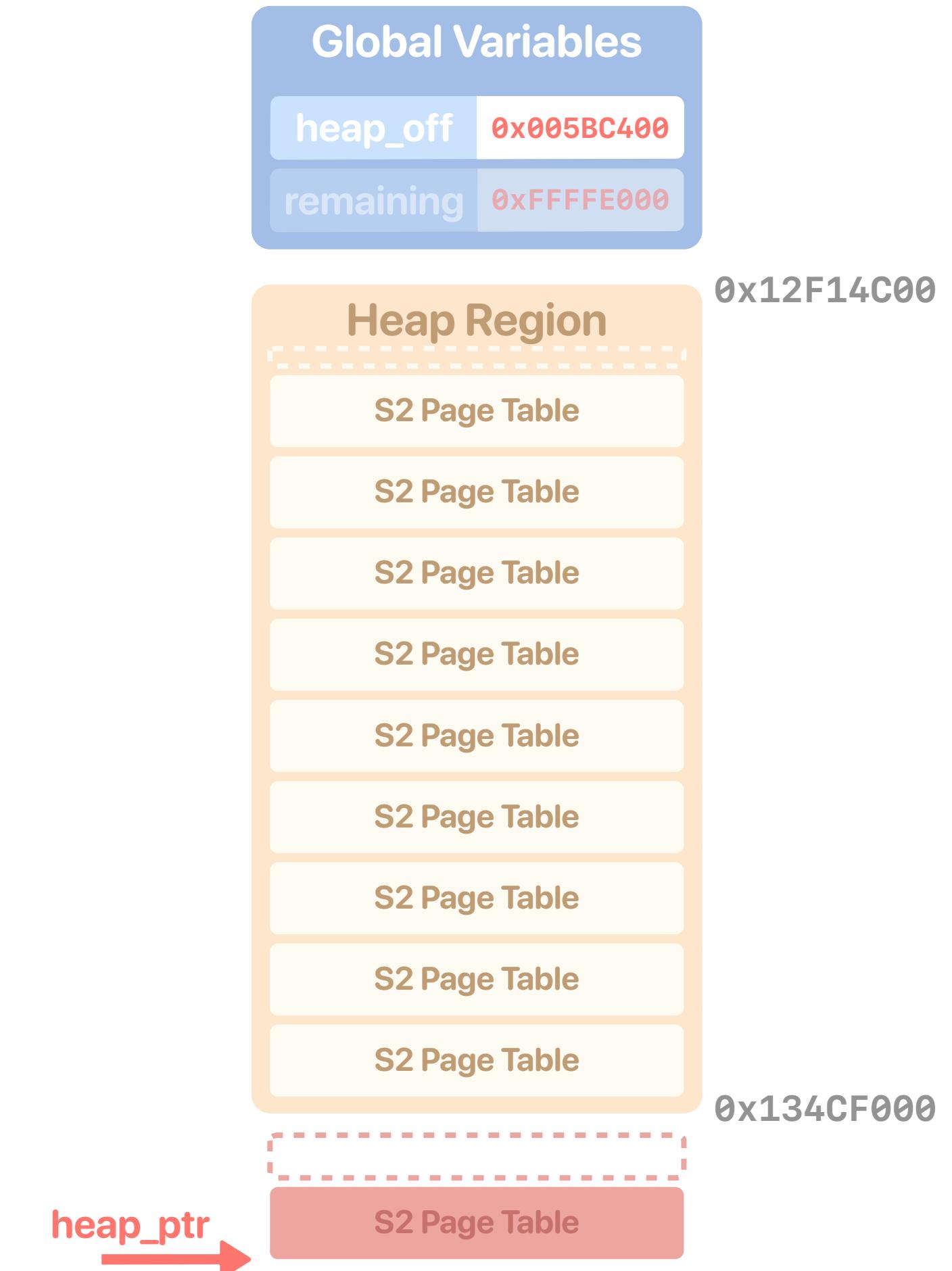


Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

▶ Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations
- **Step 2:** Use the constrained write primitive to move the offset right past the end of heap
- **Step 3:** Trigger a last stage 2 page table allocation that is made **out-of-bounds** because of the **integer underflow**



Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

► Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations
- **Step 2:** Use the constrained write primitive to move the offset right past the end of heap
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S2 Page Table		
0x10000000	0x10000000	RO
0x10001000	0x10001000	RO
0x10002000	0x10002000	RO
...
0x101FD000	0x101FD000	RO
0x101FE000	0x101FE000	RO
0x101FF000	0x101FF000	RO

HVC Handler

```
mov x1, #8
mov x0, x8
str x1, [x8]
```

Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

► Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations
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- **Step 4:** Change the page table from the kernel to **remap** the hypervisor as **read-write**

S2 Page Table		
0x10000000	0x12F00000	RW
0x10001000	0x12F01000	RW
0x10002000	0x12F02000	RW
...
0x101FD000	0x130FD000	RW
0x101FE000	0x130FE000	RW
0x101FF000	0x130FF000	RW

HVC Handler

```
mov x1, #8
mov x0, x8
str x1, [x8]
```

Security Hypervisor

Exploitation

► Getting code execution

- **Step 1:** Fill up the heap to its maximum by triggering **stage 2 page tables** allocations
- **Step 2:** Use the constrained write primitive to move the offset right past the end of heap
- **Step 3:** Trigger a last stage 2 page table allocation that is made **out-of-bounds** because of the **integer underflow**
- **Step 4:** Change the page table from the kernel to **remap** the hypervisor as **read-write**
- **Step 5:** Patch the hypervisor memory and get code execution at EL2 from EL1
 - e.g. targeting one of the HVC handlers

S2 Page Table		
0x10000000	0x12F00000	RW
0x10001000	0x12F01000	RW
0x10002000	0x12F02000	RW
...
0x101FD000	0x130FD000	RW
0x101FE000	0x130FE000	RW
0x101FF000	0x130FF000	RW

HVC Handler

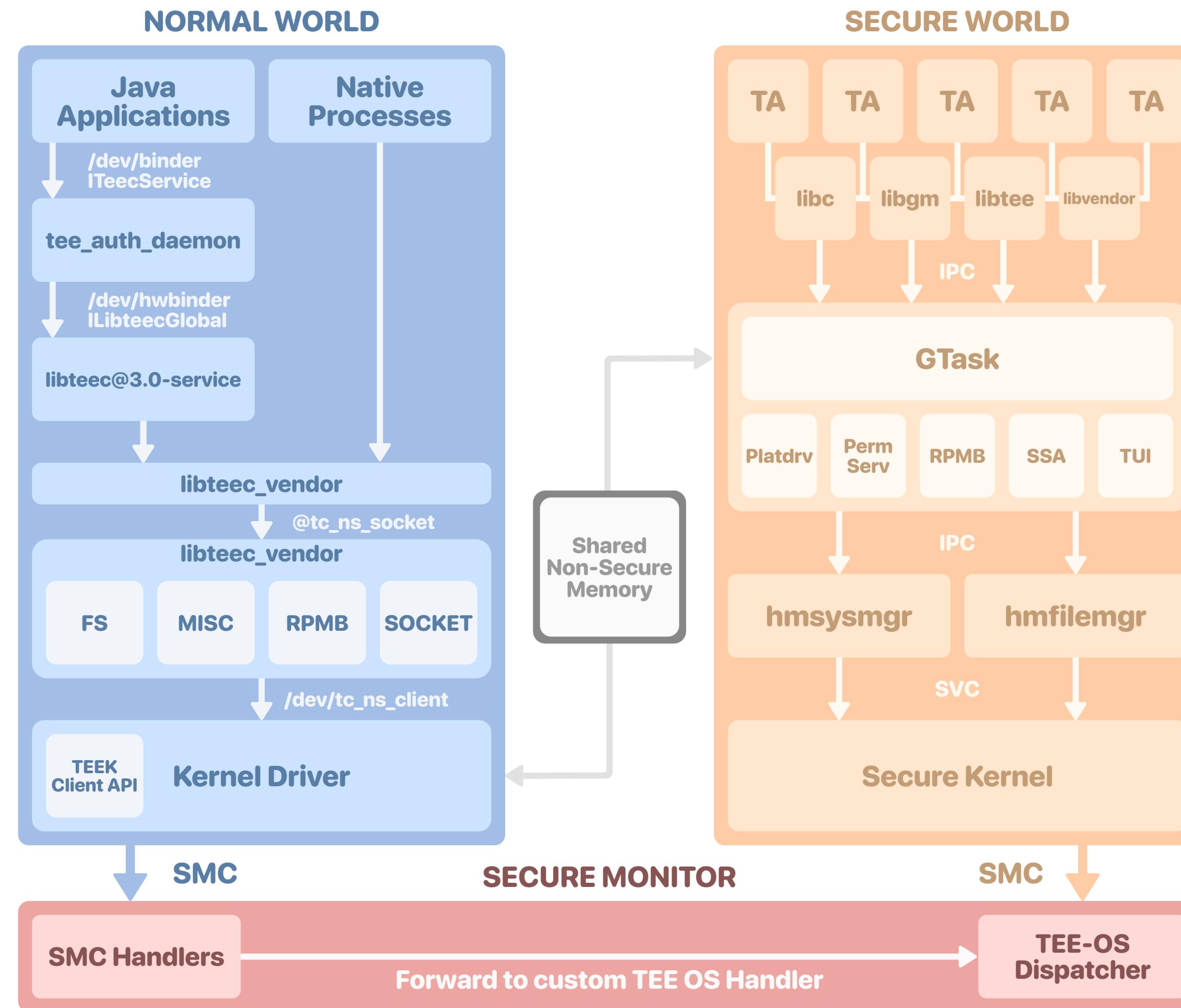
```
mrs x0, CurrentEL
str x0, [x8]
ret
```



TrustZone

TrustZone

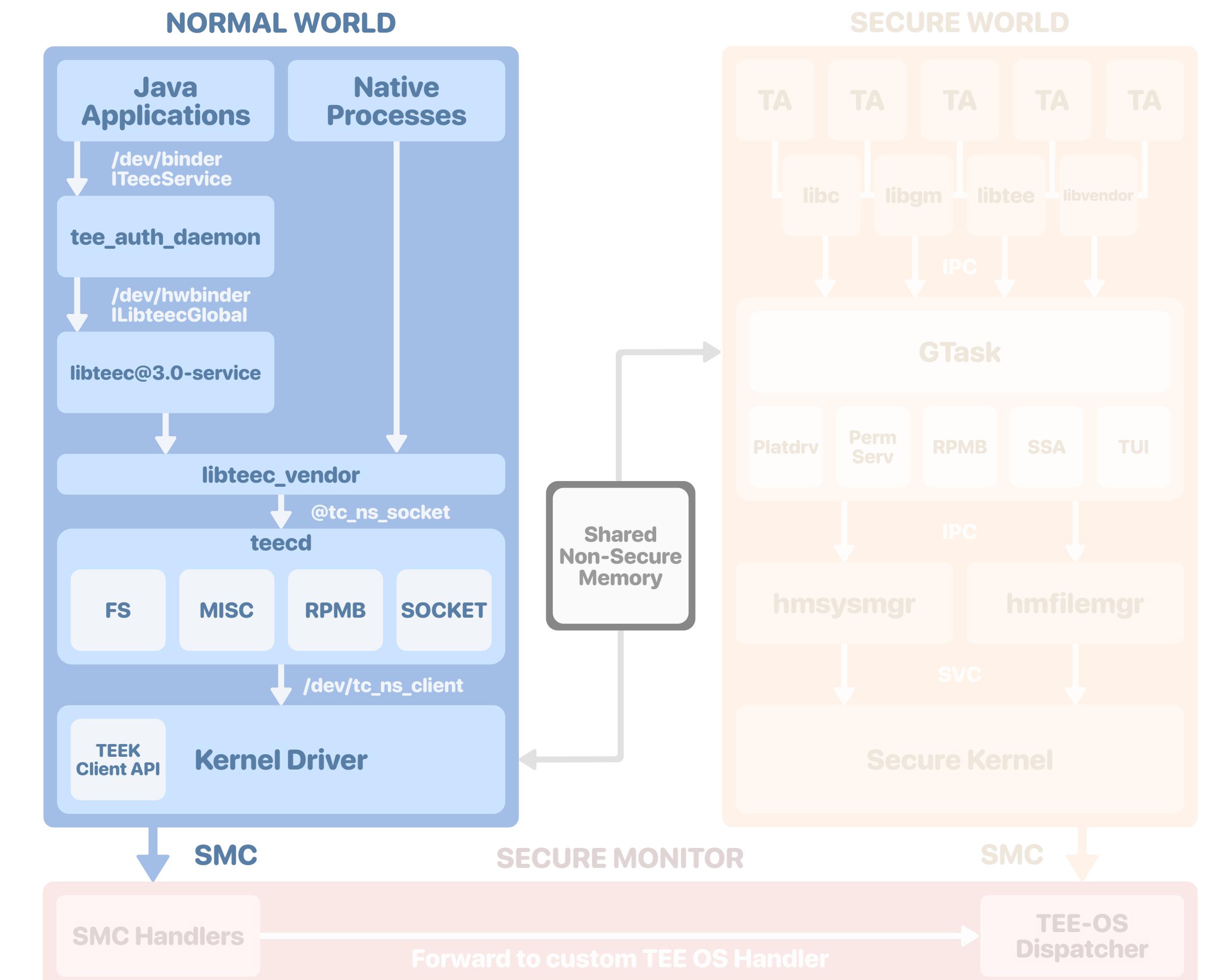
Overview



TrustZone

Normal World Overview

- ▶ Java applications & native processes
 - Main users of secure world features
 - But not privileged enough to send requests to the Secure World
 - Use the **kernel** as a proxy
- ▶ Steps to **send messages** to the Secure World from **userland**
 - Requests are received by the userland daemon *teeecd*
 - First go through *tee_auth_daemon* for Java applications
 - And then forwarded to the kernel through the character device *tc_ns_client*
 - Implements the **agents** (filesystem, networking, etc.)
 - Provides a **shared library** to communicate with it
 - The kernel then sends the requests to the Secure World through an SMC
- ▶ Each interface has its own **SELinux context** to restrict access



TrustZone

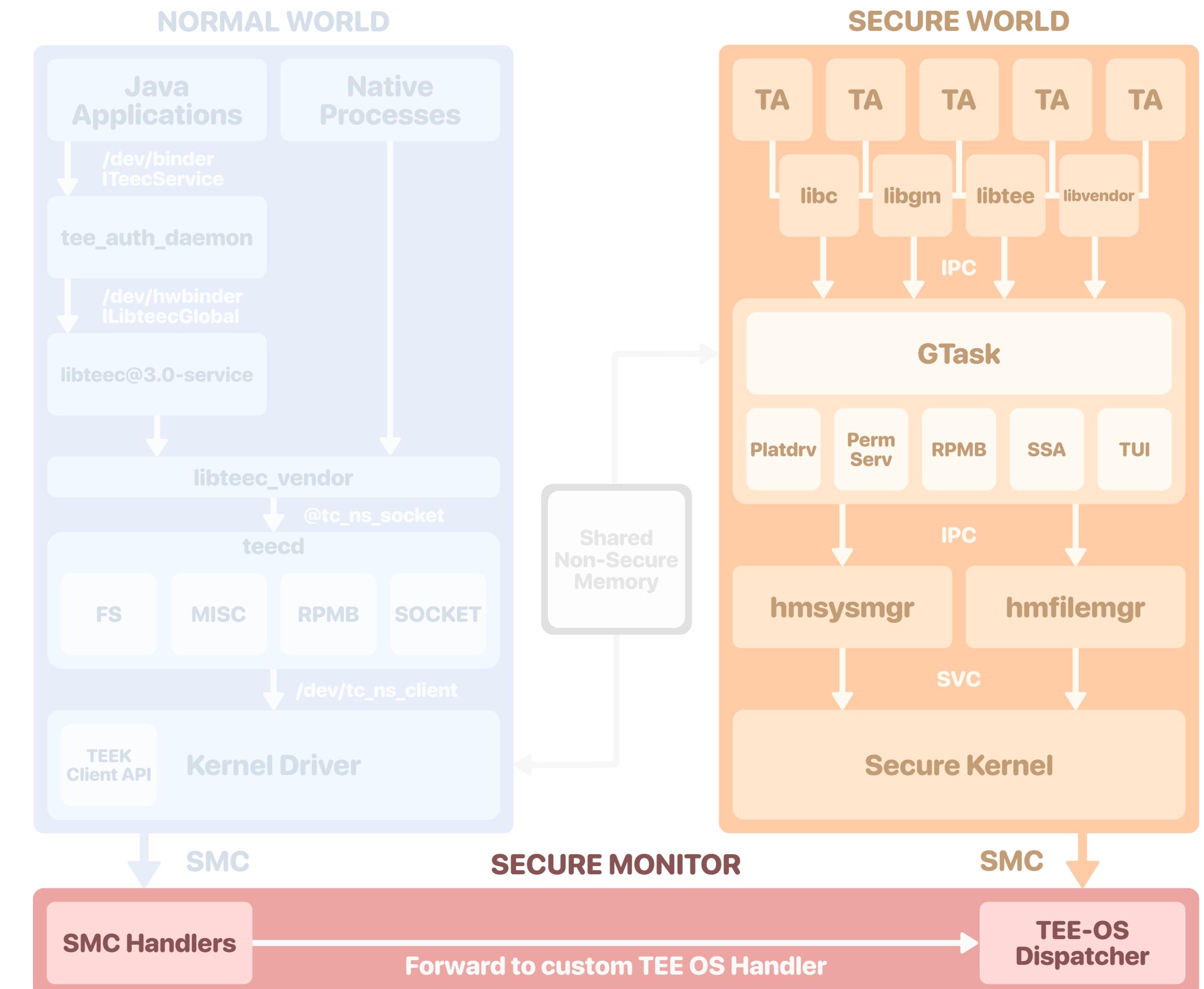
Secure World Overview

► Secure Monitor

- Handles SMCs and forwards requests to the trusted OS

► Trusted OS

- Based on a micro-kernel architecture
- Trusted applications running on top of privileged tasks and drivers



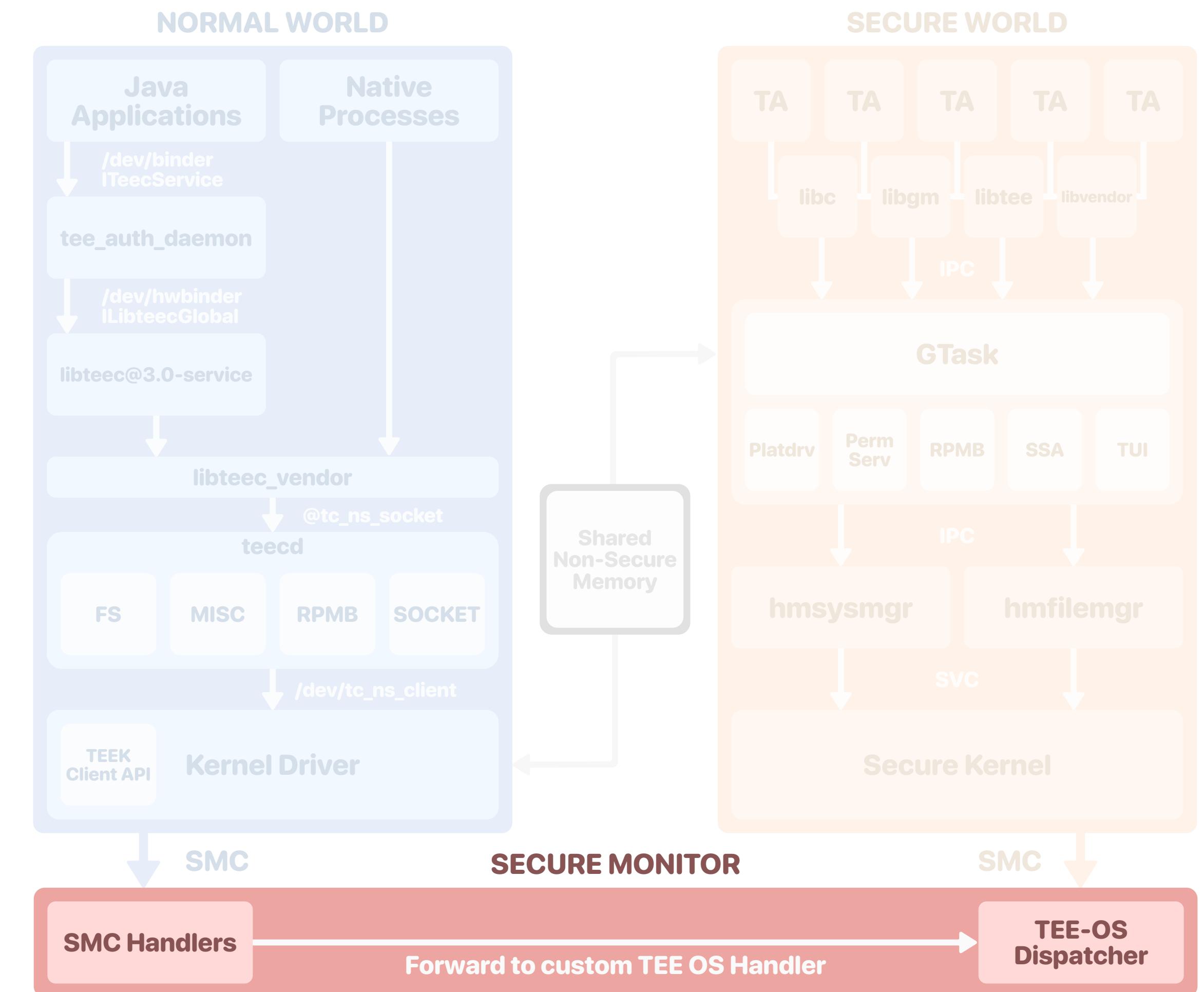


Secure Monitor

Secure Monitor

Introduction

- ▶ Executes at **EL3**, the highest privilege level
 - Performs **privileged operations** and manages critical hardware **peripherals**
 - e.g. efuses, power controls, RPMB, etc.
 - Bridge between the **Normal** and **Secure** **Worlds**
 - Forwards requests between the kernel and the trusted OS
- ▶ Huawei's implementation based on the **ARM Trusted Firmware** (ATF)
 - Open source, probably heavily reviewed
- ▶ Huawei implemented additional **runtime services**
 - These handlers are more likely to be vulnerable



Secure Monitor

Vulnerability

▶ CVE-2021-39994

- Secure Monitor acts as a pass-through for the kernel to interact with the **Secure Element** (SE)
- A response from the SE uses the *user_data* structure where the user controls:
 - The address of *user_data*, that contains the response **metadata**
 - The address and size of the response **data**: *user_data.addr* and *user_data.size*
- **Bounds check**
 - The user-provided addresses for *user_data* and *user_data.addr* must be in a specific **world-shared memory buffer**
 - However, in one of the requests, the **check is missing** for *user_data*
- Information about the SE's response is thus written at a **user-controlled address**
 - The response code *0xAABBCC55* at offset 4
 - The response size in the range *0x0-0xC* at offset *0xC*
 - The response data address *user_data.addr*, which is **checked**

```
struct {
    uint32_t unkn;
    uint32_t code;
    uint32_t addr;
    uint32_t size;
} user_data;

uint32_t user_size;

/* check(user_data, user_size) is missing */
void on_reply(uint32_t addr, uint32_t size) {
    user_data.code = 0xAABBCC55;
    user_data.size = min(size, user_size);
    if (check(user_data.addr, user_data.size))
        memcpy(user_data.addr, addr, user_data.size);
}
```

Secure Monitor

Exploitation

- ▶ **Step 1:** Use the response **metadata** to disable the check on the shared memory region
 - Allows copying the response **data** at an arbitrary *user_data.addr*
 - Data isn't controlled either, but gives us more options

Data overwritten using the SE response metadata

Global Variables	
cma_addr	0x40000000
cma_size	0x10000000

Secure Monitor

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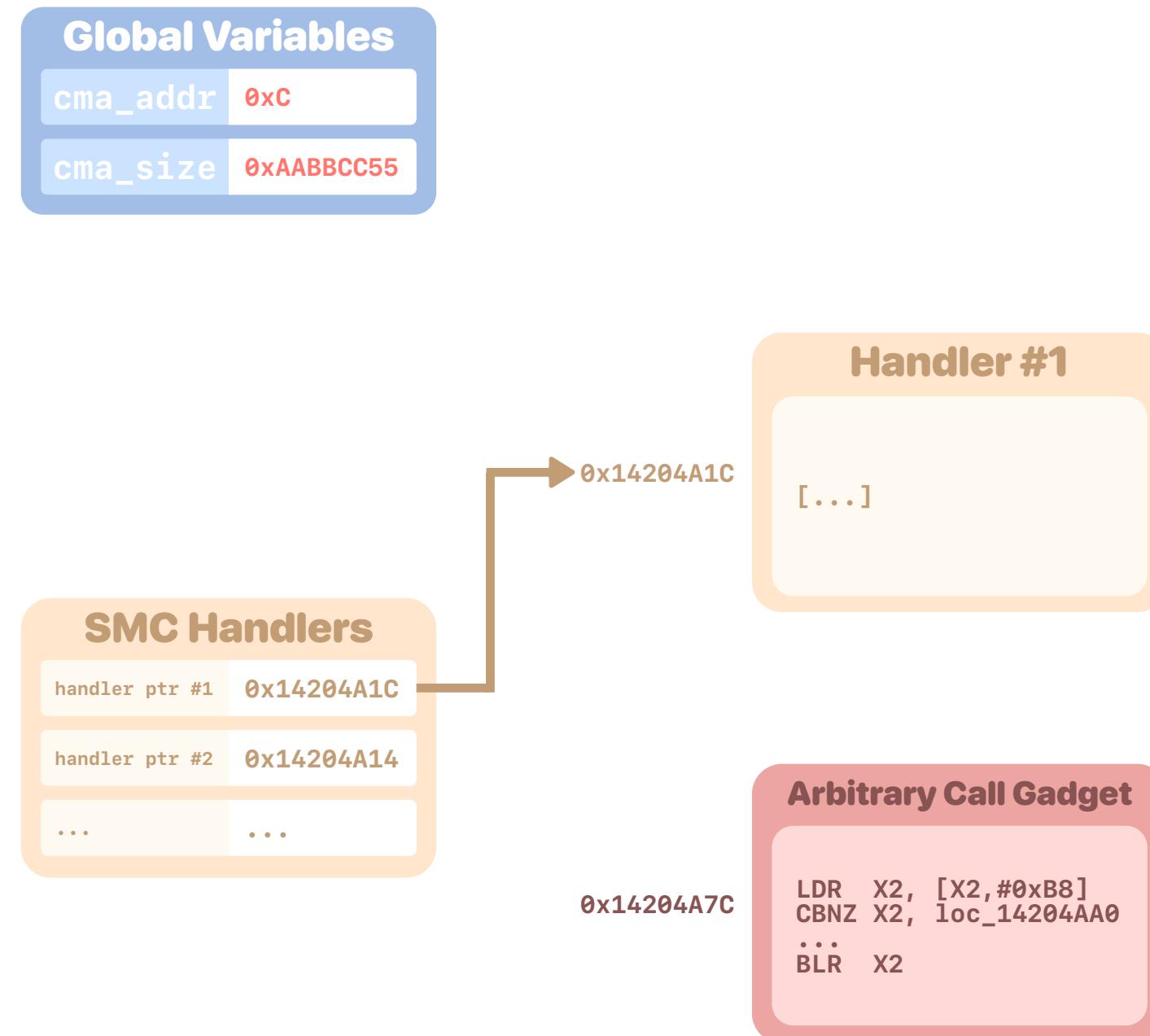
Data overwritten using the SE response metadata

Global Variables	
cma_addr	0xC
cma_size	0xAABBCC55

Secure Monitor

Exploitation

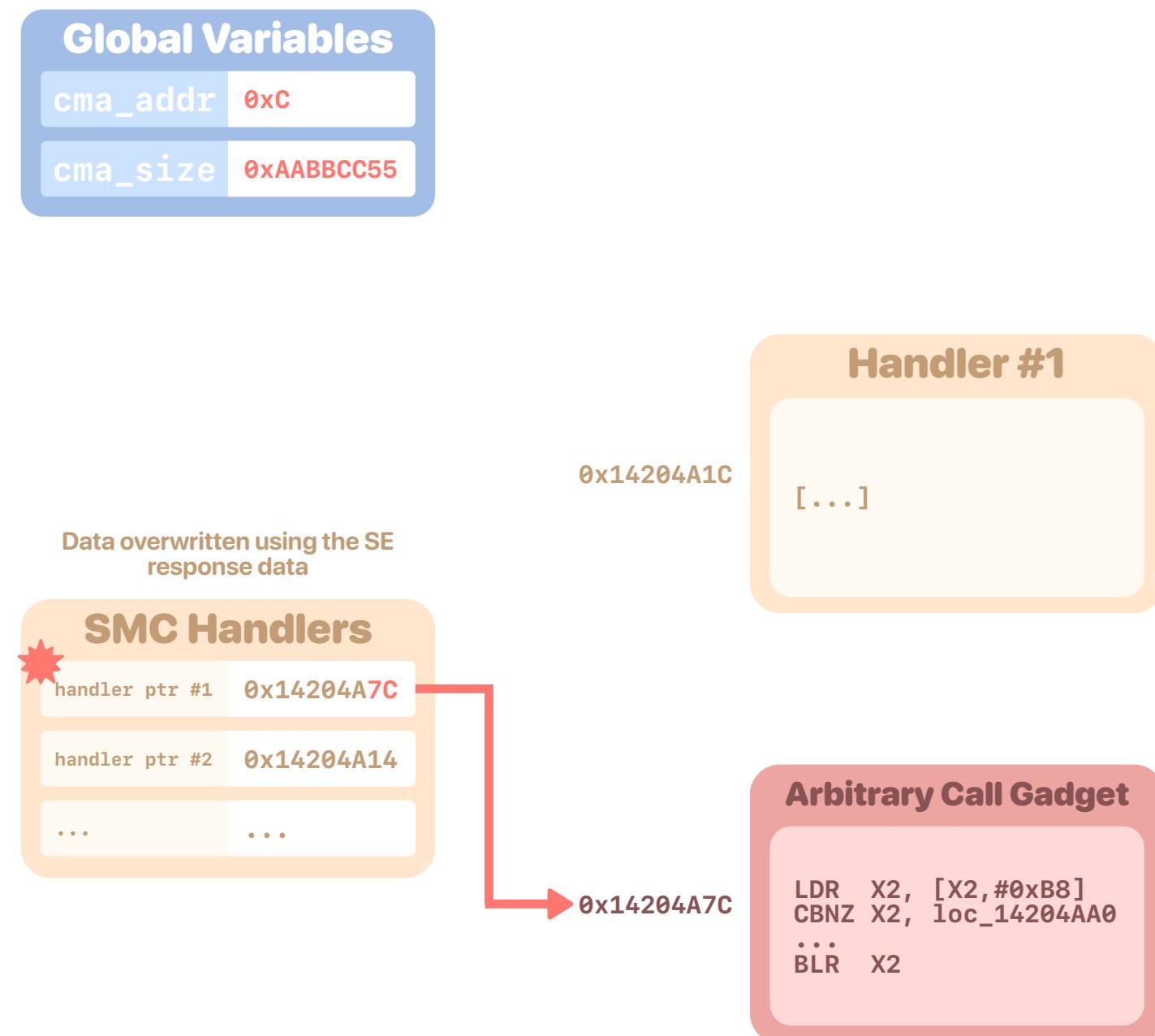
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 - 1-byte overwrite by specifying a **response size** of 1
 - Change an existing function pointer to an interesting gadget
 - BLR X2 —> arbitrary function call



Secure Monitor

Exploitation

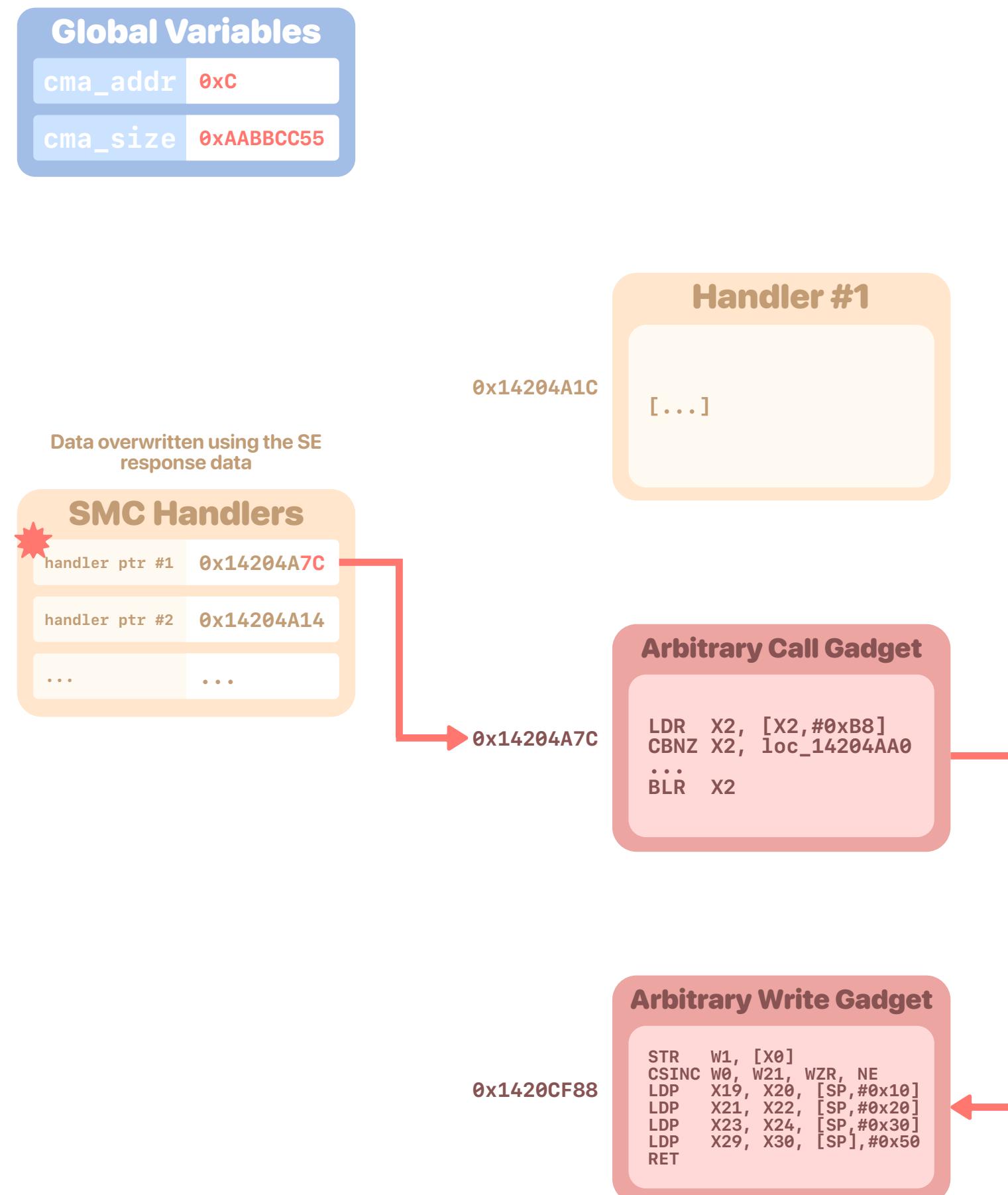
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Secure Monitor

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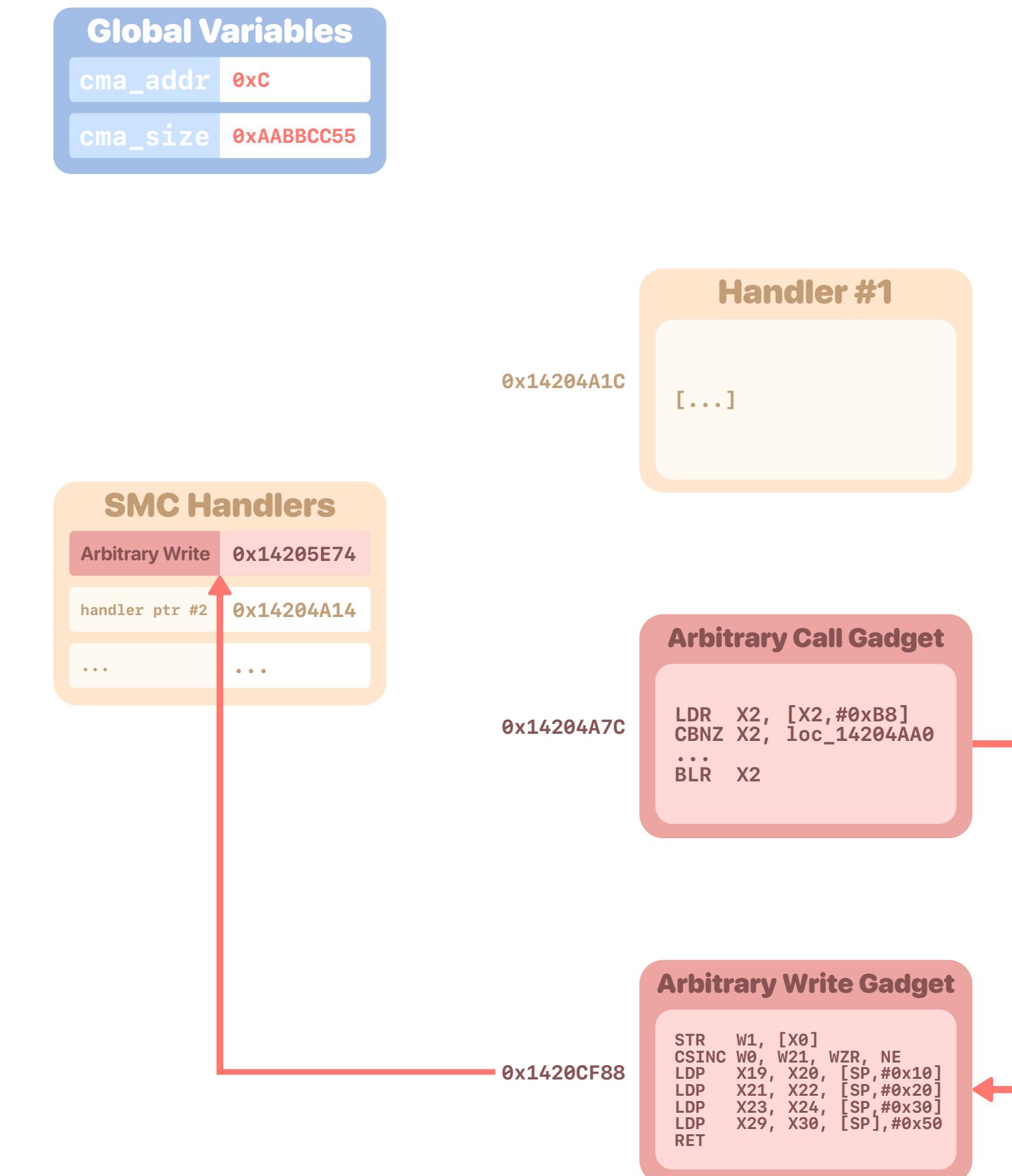
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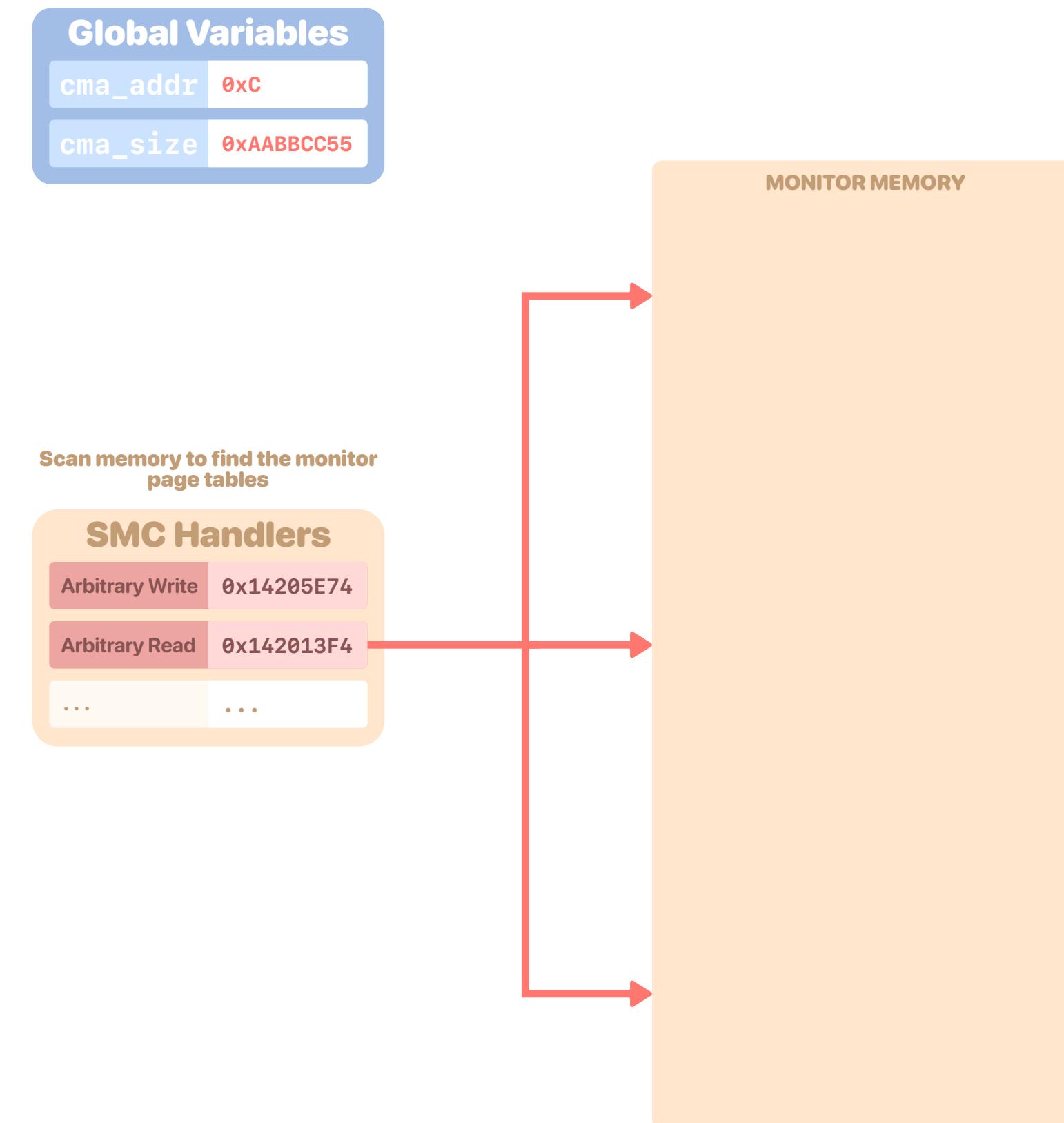
Global Variables	
cma_addr	0xC
cma_size	0xAABBCC55

SMC Handlers	
Arbitrary Write	0x14205E74
Arbitrary Read	0x142013F4
...	...
...	...

Secure Monitor

Exploitation

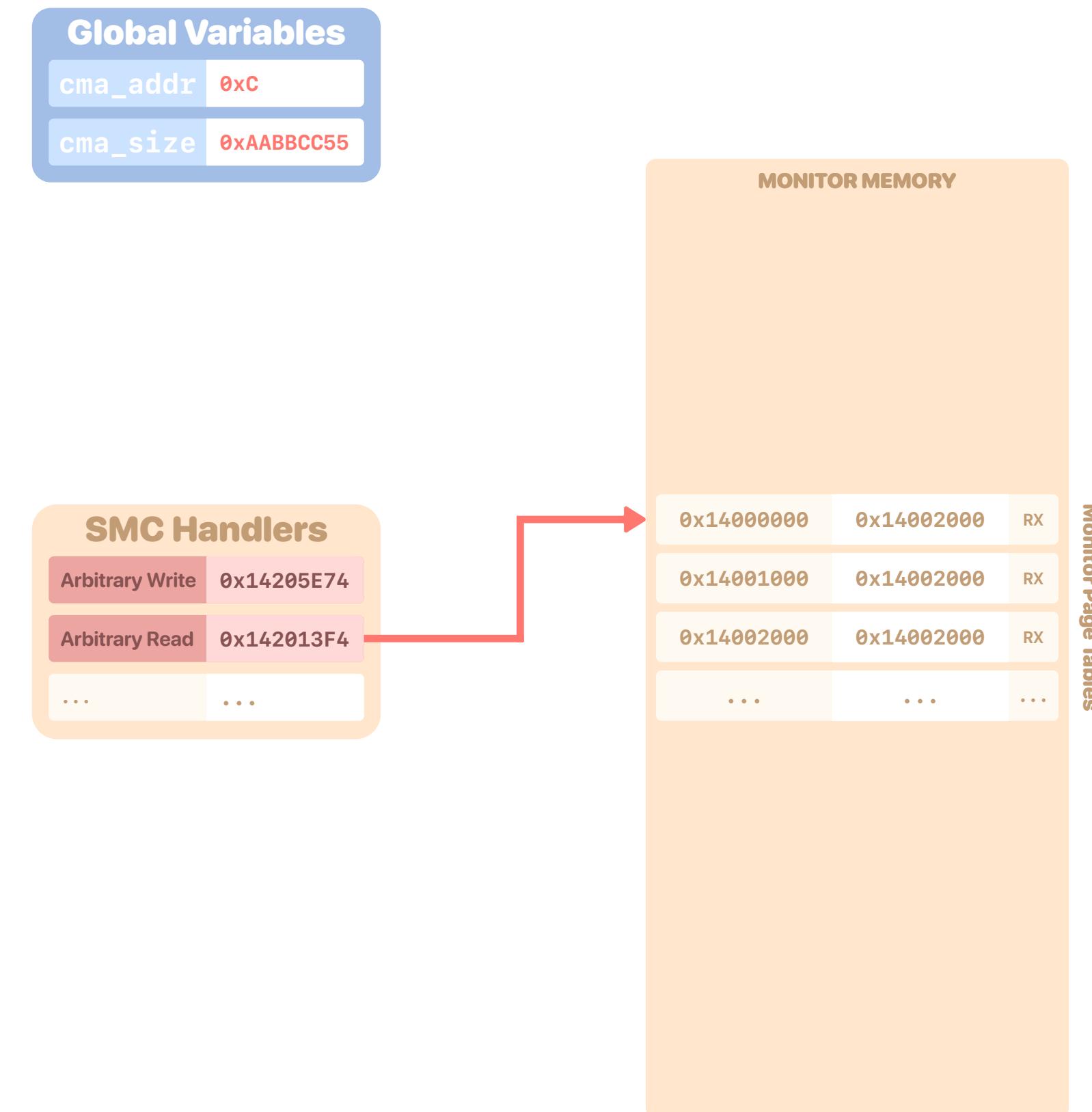
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 - Locate the secure monitor page tables
 - Add new entries where the memory is read-write
 - Patch the code to gain code execution



Secure Monitor

Exploitation

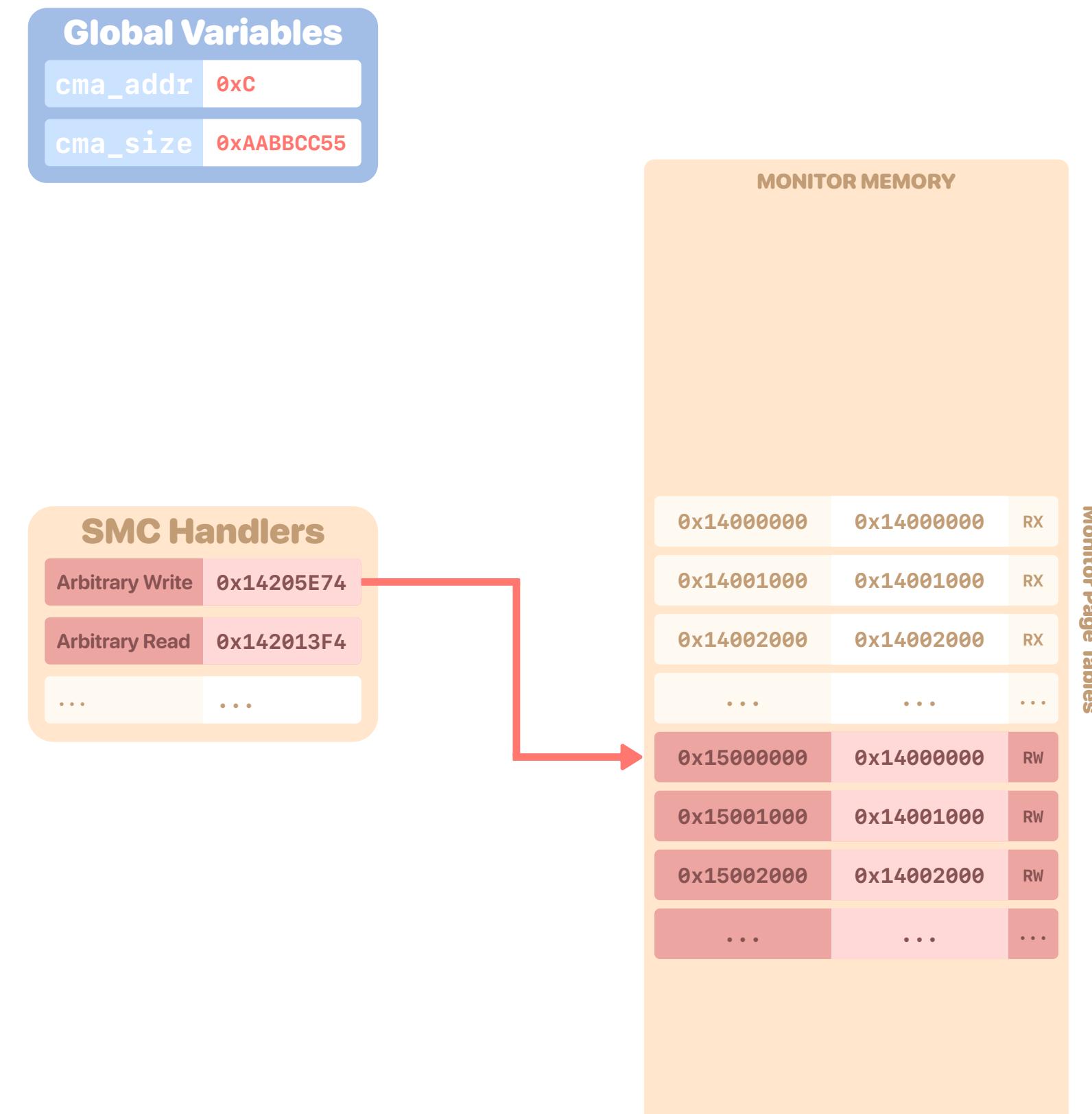
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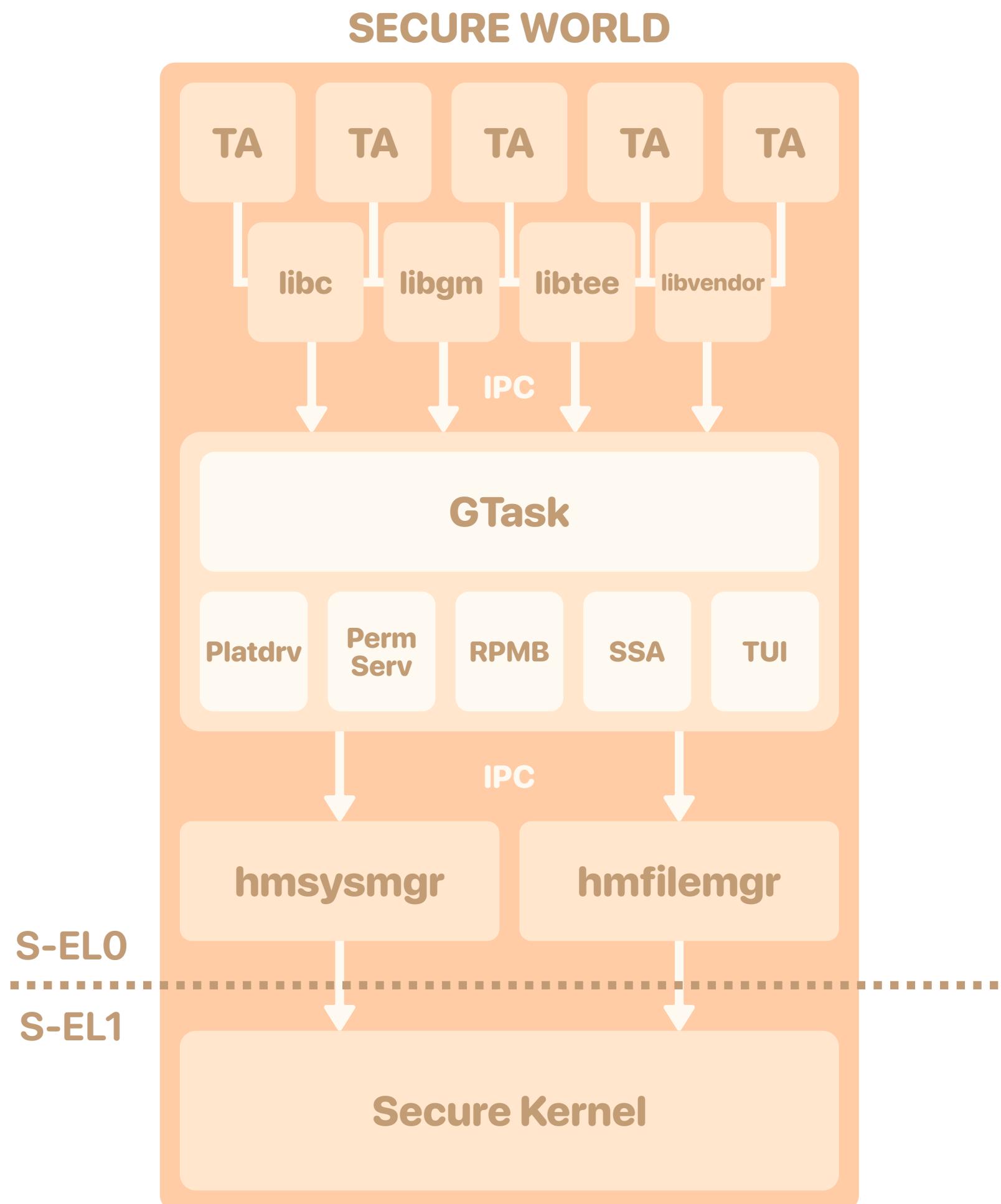


Trusted OS

Trusted OS

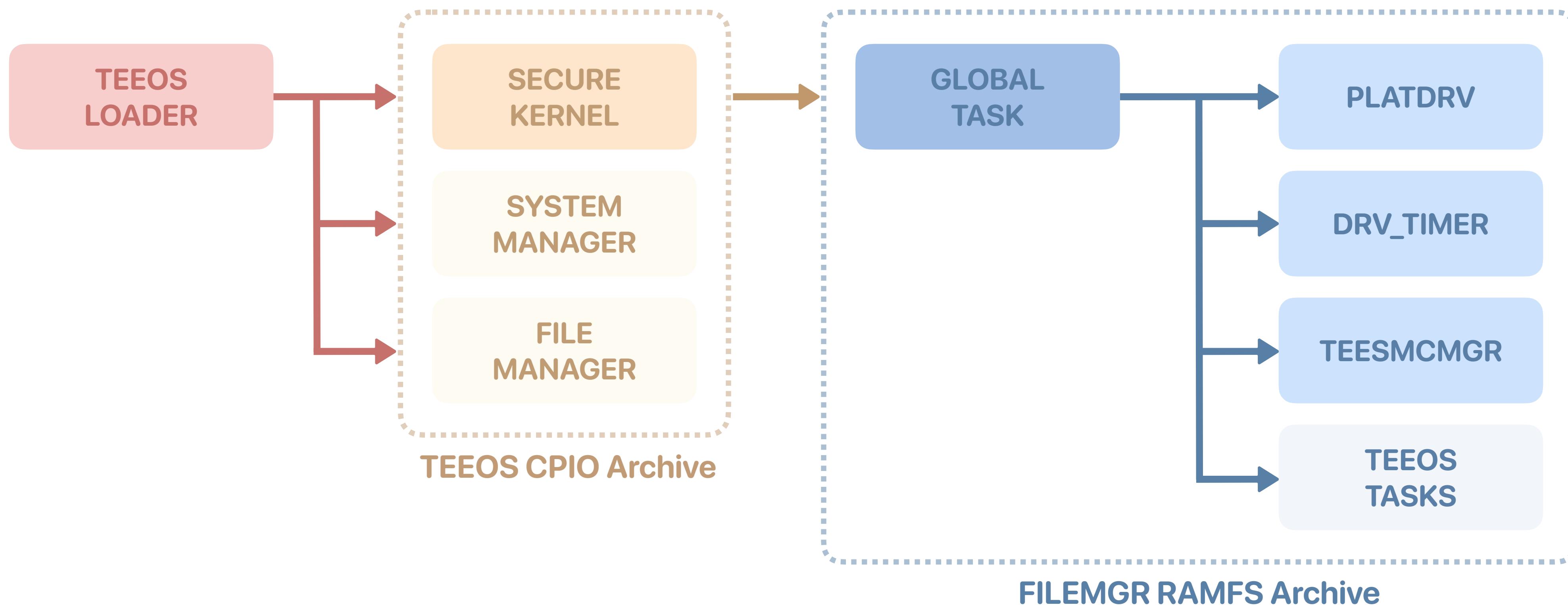
Introduction

- ▶ Huawei Trusted OS based on a **micro-kernel architecture**
 - **Secure Kernel (S-EL1)**
 - Responsibilities kept to the bare minimum
 - Critical operations are performed through an API restricted to Managers in userland
 - **Processes (S-EL0)**
 - **Managers:** privileged processes providing the core functionality of the trusted OS
 - **Tasks & Drivers:** implement additional OS services used by the trusted applications
 - **Trusted Applications:** Huawei and 3rd party applications providing services to the REE



Trusted OS

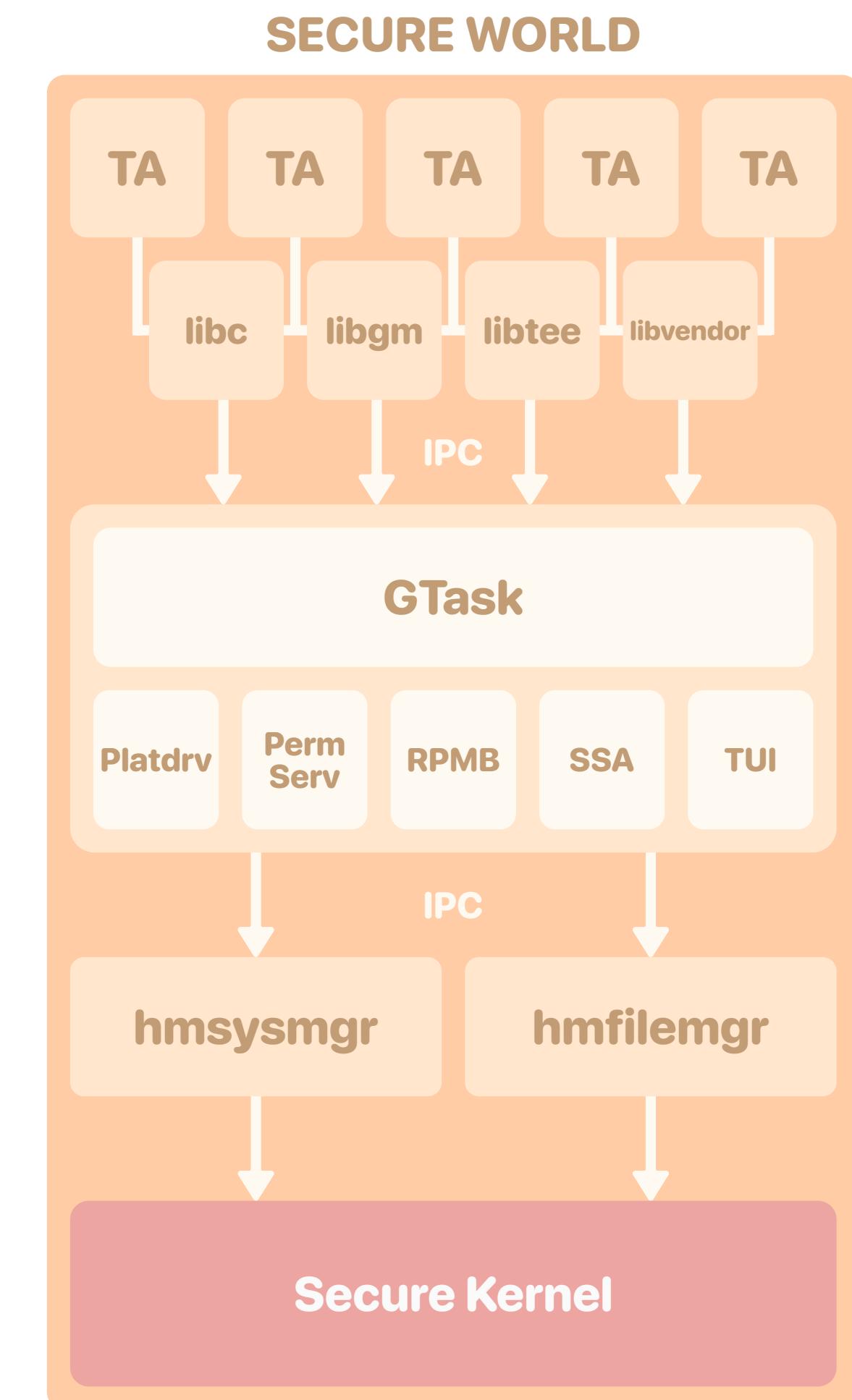
Boot Process



Secure Kernel

Introduction

- ▶ Only performs **low-level operations**, such as:
 - Physical memory allocation
 - Inter-process communication
 - Process scheduling
 - Access control management
- ▶ Everything else is implemented in **userland**
- ▶ SVCs for **critical operations** restricted to the Managers



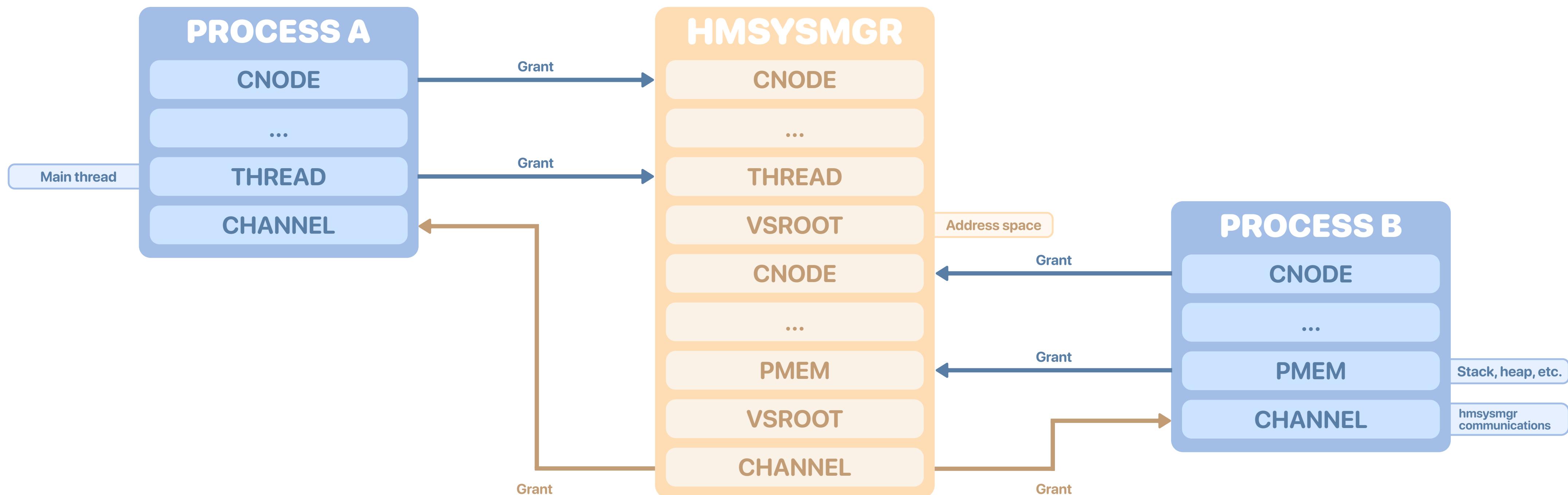
Secure Kernel

Capabilities

- ▶ **Capability-based OS**
 - Privileges are divided into distinct units called **capabilities**
 - Provides fine-grained access to kernel resources
- ▶ **Huawei Implementation**
 - Most likely inspired by **seL4**
 - Capabilities system described in a **patent** filed in 2019
 - All system resources are associated with a capability
 - Capabilities are **owned** by a **CNode** (capability node)
 - Capabilities can be **granted** to and **revoked** from other CNodes
- ▶ **Capability type examples**
 - CNode
 - Thread
 - PMEM
 - Channel / Notification / Message
 - IRQCTRL / IRQHDLR
 - VSRoot
 - Timer
 - TEESMC
 - etc.

Secure Kernel

Capabilities Example

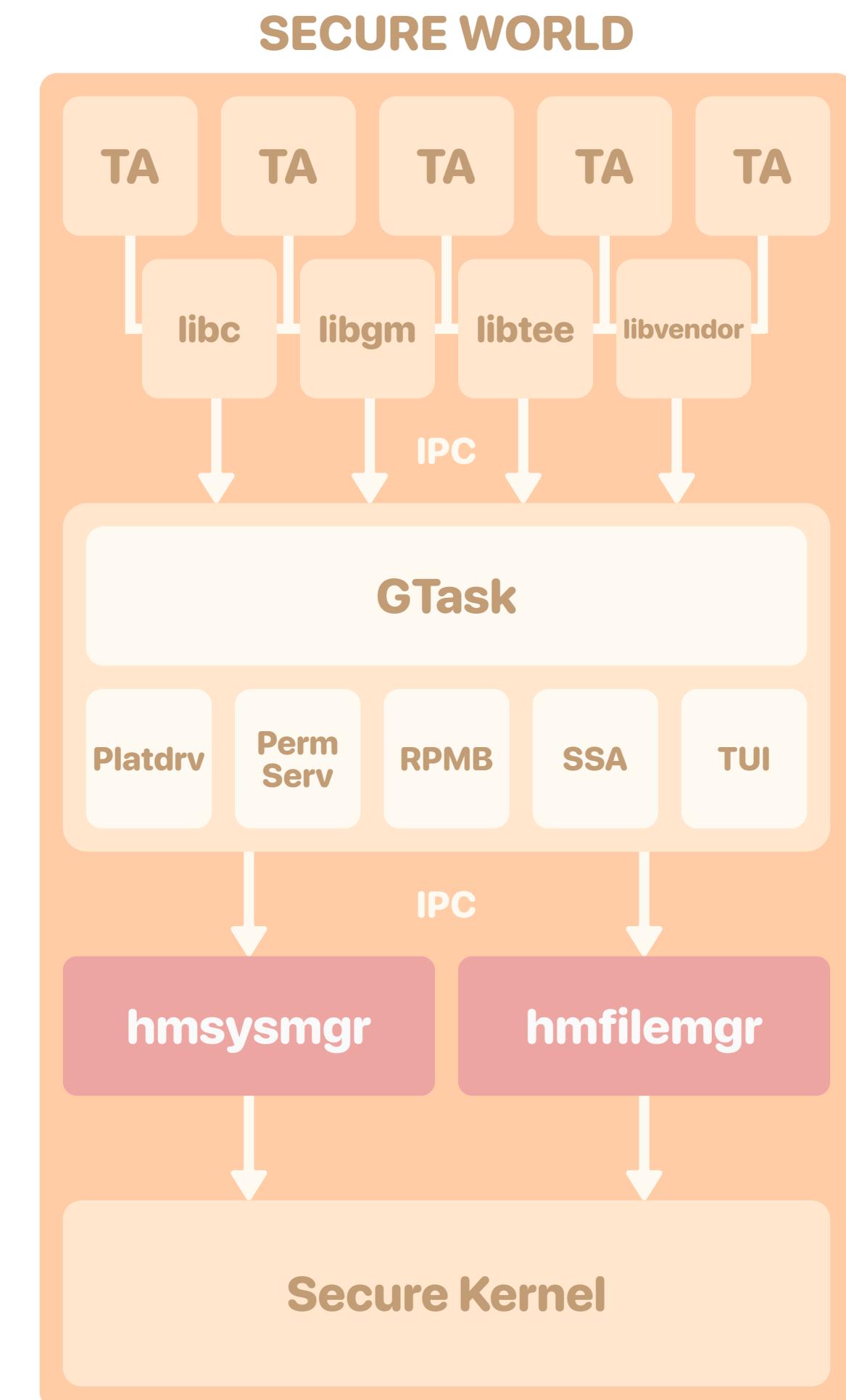


Managers

Overview

► Managers

- The only S-EL0 processes allowed to ask the secure kernel to perform critical operations
 - e.g. mapping physical secure memory
- Can be considered as **extensions** of the micro-kernel in **userland**



Managers

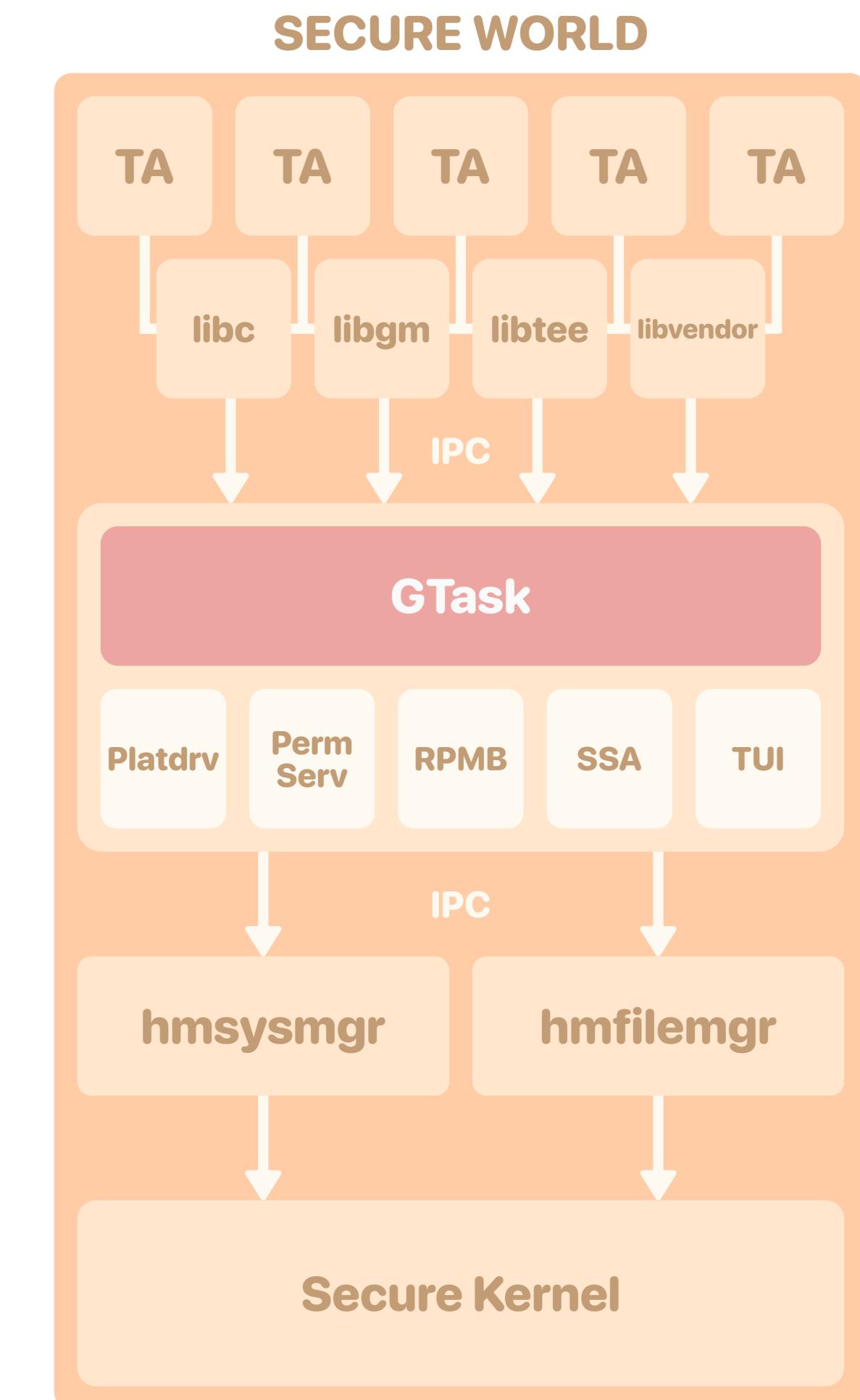
File & System Managers

- ▶ **File manager** (hmfilemgr)
 - Manages and exposes two virtual file systems
 - **RAMFS**
 - Embedded archive
 - Contains tasks binaries
 - **TAFS**
 - Temporary storage for trustlets and libraries
- ▶ **System manager** (hmsysmgr)
 - Implements most of the **fundamental features** of the OS
 - Process creation
 - Virtual memory management
 - Access control
 - etc.
 - ▶ Communicate with other processes through **IPCs**
 - ▶ Permissions of the calling process are checked in the command handlers

Tasks & Drivers

Global Task

- ▶ Equivalent to the **init** process on Unix-based systems
- ▶ **Handle normal world commands**
 - Mailbox/shared memory registration
 - Loading of trusted applications
 - Decryption with a private key “derived” from the **provisioned key**
 - Signature verification with a **hardcoded public key**
 - Session management
 - Forwarding of commands to trusted applications

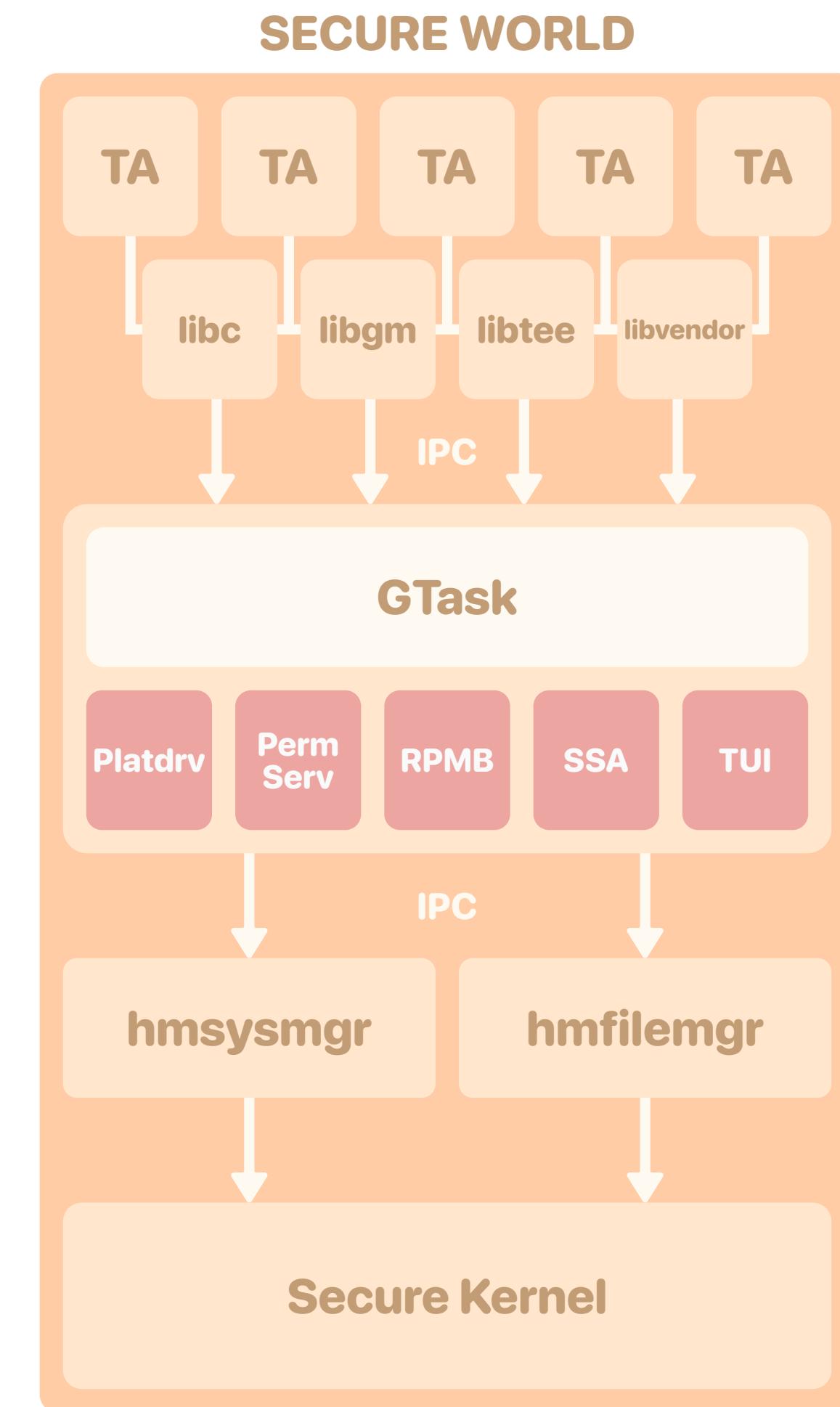


Tasks & Drivers

Examples of Tasks & Drivers

- ▶ **DRV_TIMER**
 - Manages secure timers
- ▶ **GATEKEEPER**
 - Gatekeeper implementation
- ▶ **KEYMASTER**
 - Keymaster implementation
- ▶ **PERMISSION_SERVICE**
 - Permissions system for RPMB, SSA and TUI
- ▶ **PLATDRV**
 - Platform drivers
 - Interrupts, crypto engine, secure element, fingerprint sensor, etc.

- ▶ **RPMB**
 - RPMB filesystem
 - Uses a normal world agent
- ▶ **SSA**
 - Trusted Storage API
 - Uses a normal world agent
- ▶ **TALOADER & TARUNNER**
 - glue between GlobalPlatform and OS-level APIs
- ▶ **TUI**
 - Trusted User Interface implementation



Tasks & Drivers

Security

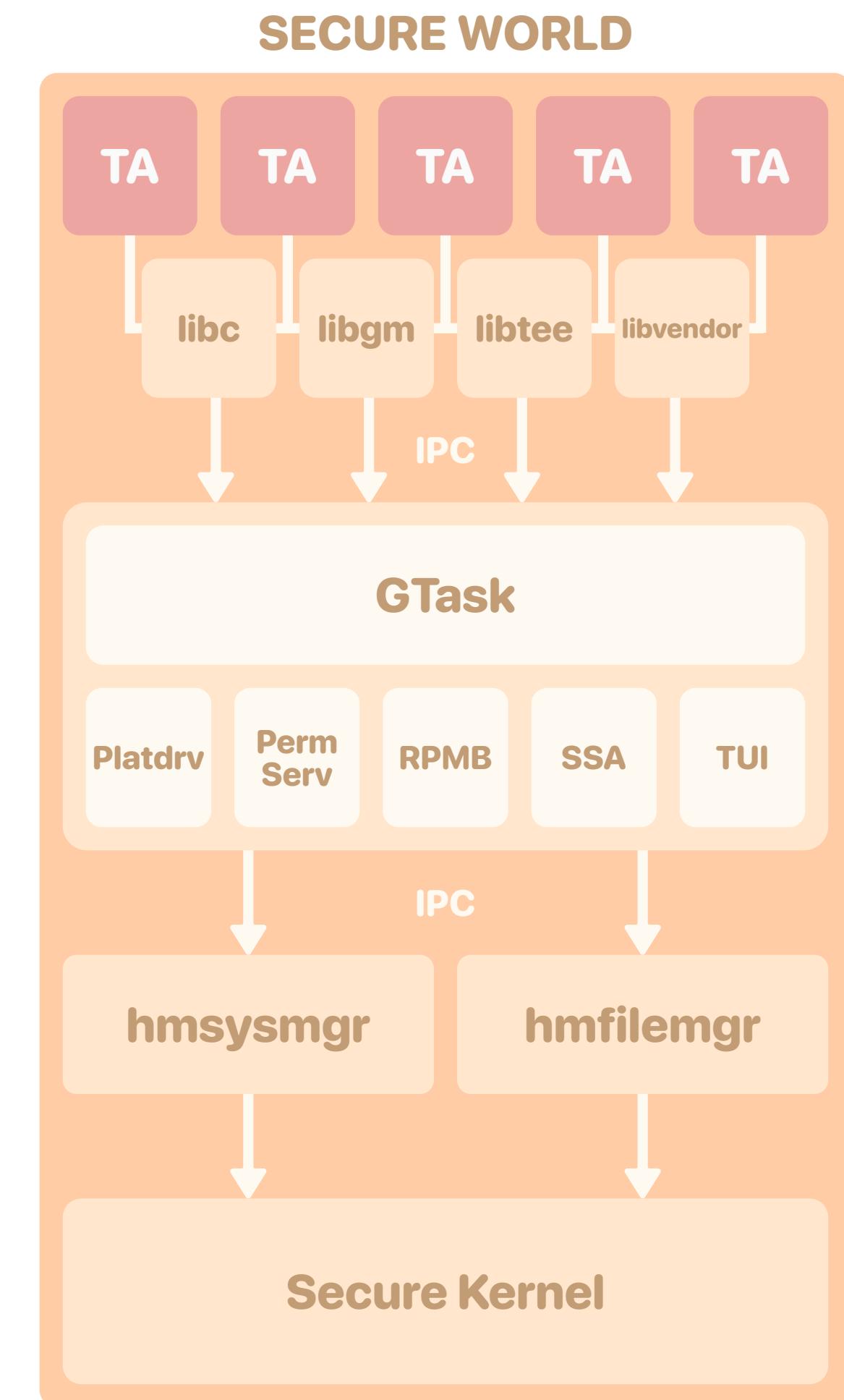
- ▶ **Vulnerability research**
 - IPC command handlers
 - **Permissions system**
 - There is a library for implementing security access controls
 - Tasks have **credentials** and **security contexts**, that can be mapped to permissions
 - Most permissions are static, but can also be added **dynamically**
 - Permissions are checked within the IPC command handlers
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities identified**
 - **TUI Task**
 - Heap buffer overflows
 - **Platdrv Task**
 - Arbitrary memory read/write
 - Non-secure physical memory read
 - Heap buffer overflows
 - Heap pointer leak
 - Only specific tasks can reach the vulnerable IPC command handlers

Trusted Applications

Trusted Applications

Introduction

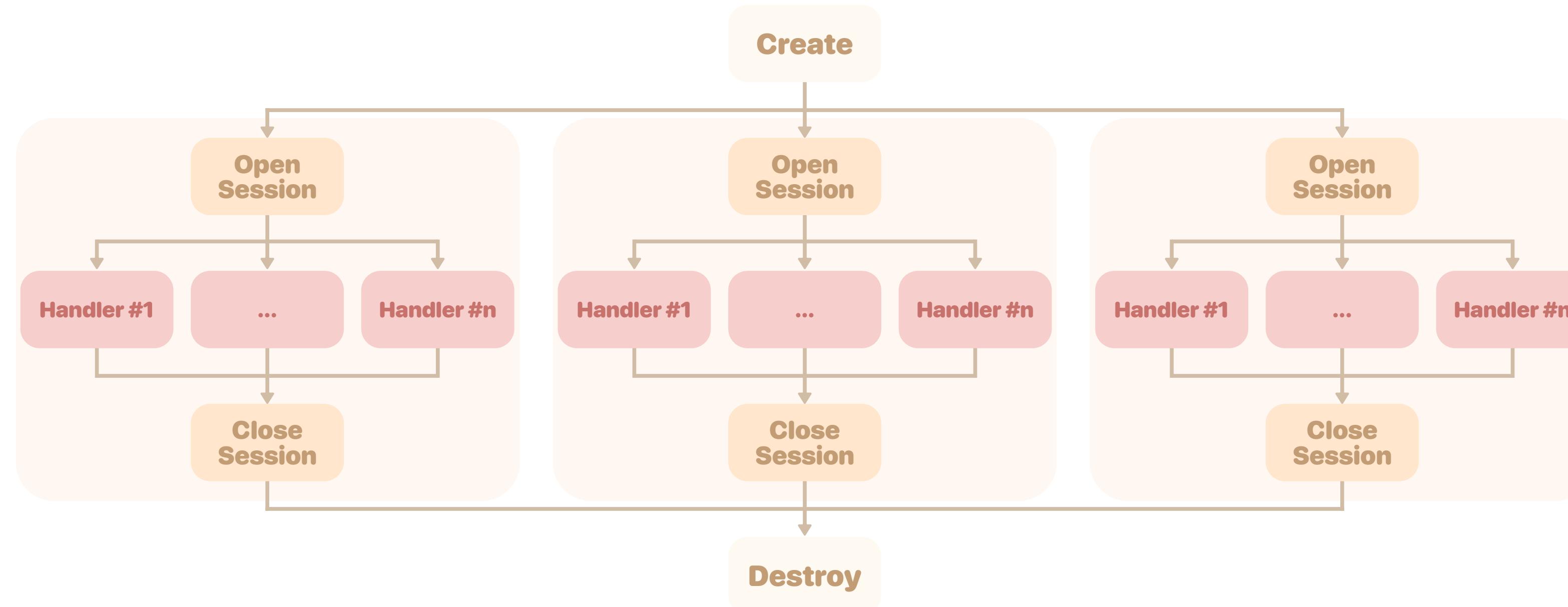
- ▶ Secure world **userland applications**
- ▶ Developed by Huawei and 3rd parties to **provide services** to the Normal World
- ▶ Use the standard **GlobalPlatform APIs**, as well as some proprietary extensions
- ▶ Generally loaded from the Normal World
 - Stored in the Android system/vendor partitions or embedded in APKs
 - Signed and encrypted



Trusted Applications

Life Cycle

- ▶ Trusted Applications Properties
 - Single instance, multi session, instance keep alive, etc.
- ▶ Create and Destroy
 - Manage the global state
 - Declare the **allowed CAs** list
- ▶ Open and Close Sessions
 - Manage the per-CA state
- ▶ Command Invocation
 - Handles a request coming from a CA and sends back a response



Trusted Applications

Authentication

- ▶ Trusted applications embed a list of authorized APKs/binaries
 - **APK**: package name + signing public key
 - **Binaries**: file path + user id + hash of code pages
- ▶ **Chain of trust**
 - The kernel is assumed to be uncompromised
 - The kernel authenticates teecd
 - teecd forwards information about the binaries

Trusted Applications

Design Choices & Mitigations

- ▶ Design choices

- Secure functions (e.g. `memcpy_s`)
- Parameter buffers are copied to prevent inter-world TOCTOU
- Robust and generic Parcel-based system to handle data in a safe manner
- Output buffer sizes can only be reduced
- Etc.

- ▶ Software Mitigations

- NX
- RelRO
- Stack cookies
- ASLR
 - Used to be **bypassable** with an arbitrary read
 - The TA base address was written at a fixed address by the loader
 - Only works for the ELF sections, **stack** and **heap** are still randomized

Trusted Applications

Methodology

- ▶ **Reverse engineering:** ~40 trustlets, mainly AArch32 ELF but some AArch64
- ▶ The **attack surface** mostly boils down to the command handlers
- ▶ **Fuzzing:** developed a custom fuzzer based on *Unicorn/AFL++*
 - **Obstacles:** stubbing the GP APIs, ELF relocations, getting a backtrace
 - **Limitations:** stateless, only *low hanging fruits* can be found
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities**
 - Unchecked parameter types
 - Stack & heap buffer overflows
 - Information leaks
 - OOB accesses
 - Race conditions (multi session binaries only)
 - Etc.
- ▶ Mostly in **third party** TAs

Trusted Applications

Vulnerabilities in HW_KEYMASTER

▶ HWPSIRT-2021-63568

- *cmd_unwrap* can be used to write arbitrary data to any files in the *sec_storage_data/PKI/* folder of the secure file system

▶ HWPSIRT-2021-80349

- *generate_keyblob* copies semi user-controlled data into the output parameter *params[3]*
- Should be a *memref*, but there is a code path where it can be a value

```
typedef union {
    struct {
        void* buffer;
        size_t size;
    } memref;
    struct {
        uint32_t a;
        uint32_t b;
    } value;
} TEE_Param;

TEE_Result TA_InvokeCommandEntryPoint(
    void* sessionContext,
    uint32_t commandID,
    uint32_t paramTypes,
    TEE_Param params[4]
);
```

Trusted Applications

Exploitation of HW_KEYMASTER

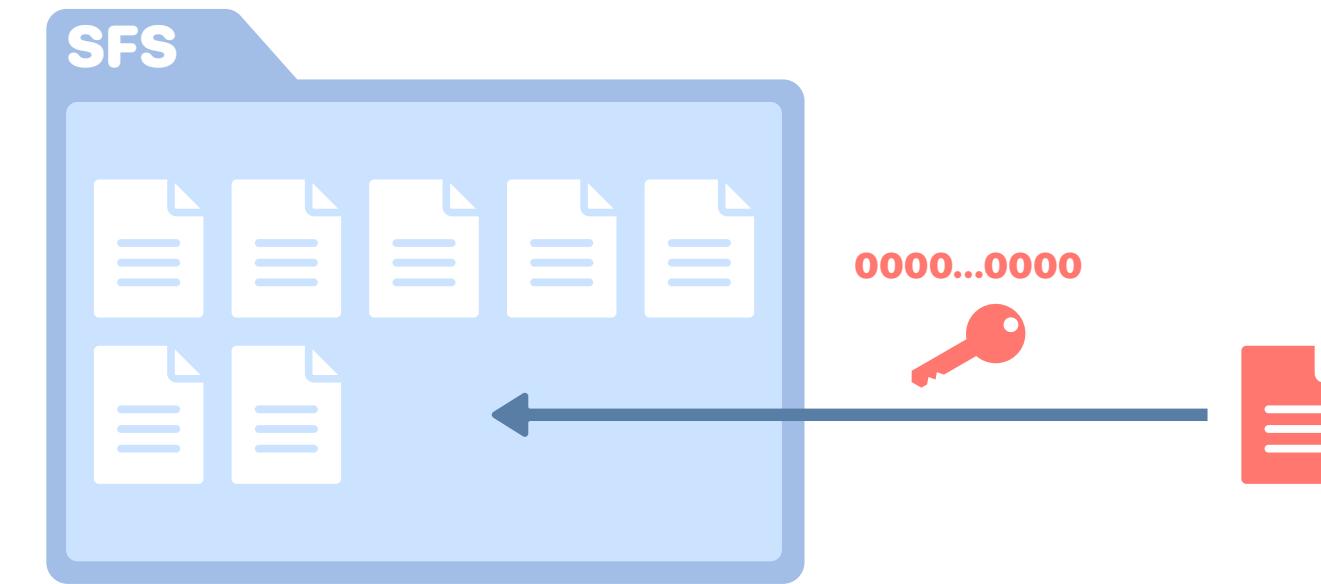
- ▶ Arbitrary read
 - Write a “fake” keyblob to the SFS using a previously imported **all-zeroes** AES key



Trusted Applications

Exploitation of HW_KEYMASTER

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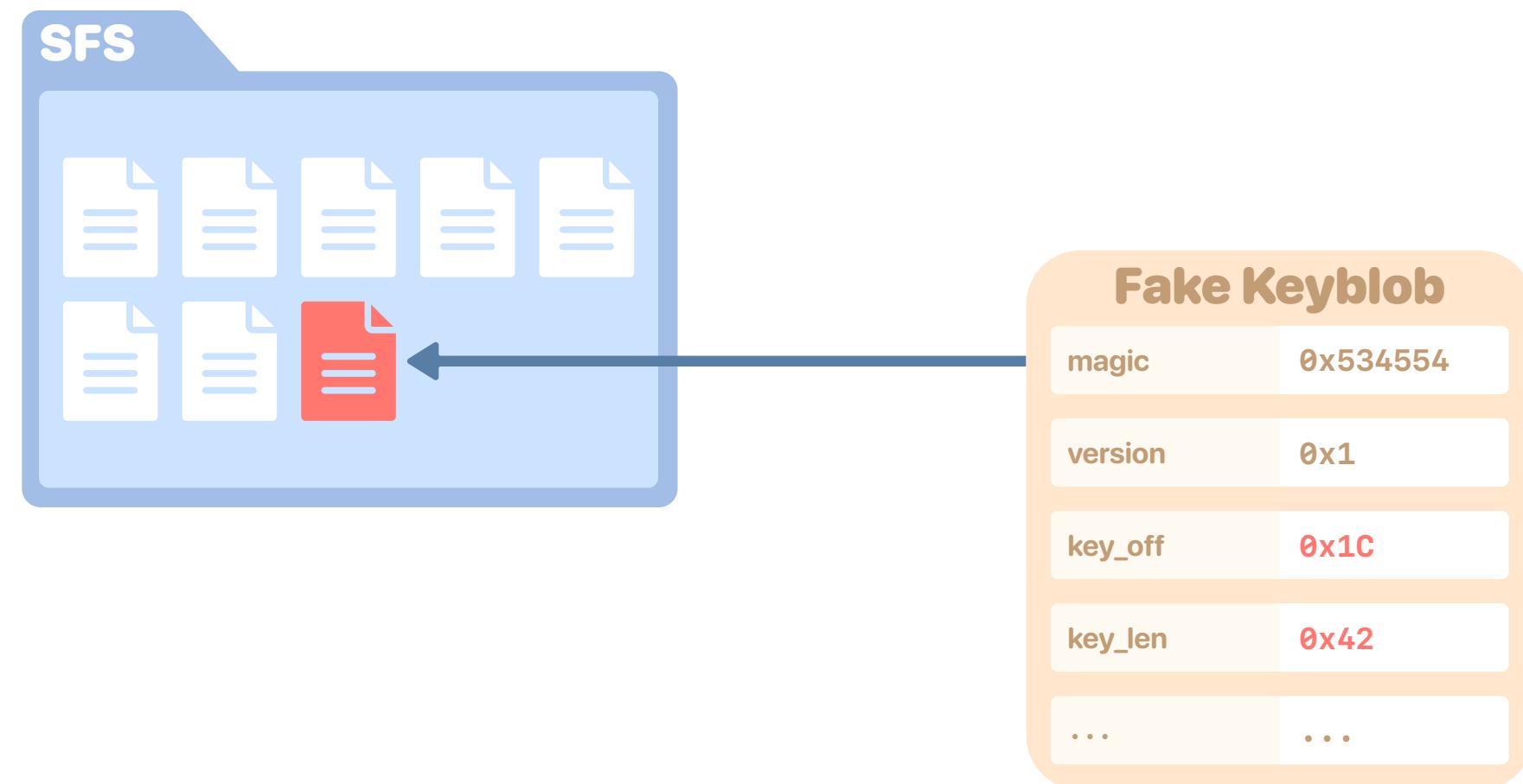


Trusted Applications

Exploitation of HW_KEYMASTER

- ▶ **Arbitrary read**

- Write a “fake” keyblob to the SFS using a previously imported **all-zeroes** AES key
- Call *cmd_get* on the “fake” keyblob to read data from a user-controlled offset



```
if (keyblob->magic == 0x534554
    && keyblob->version <= 0x12C
    && keyblob->keyblob_size == keyblob_size) {
    memcpy_s(
        params[1].memref.buffer,
        params[1].memref.size,
        keyblob + keyblob->key_off,
        keyblob->key_len);
}
```

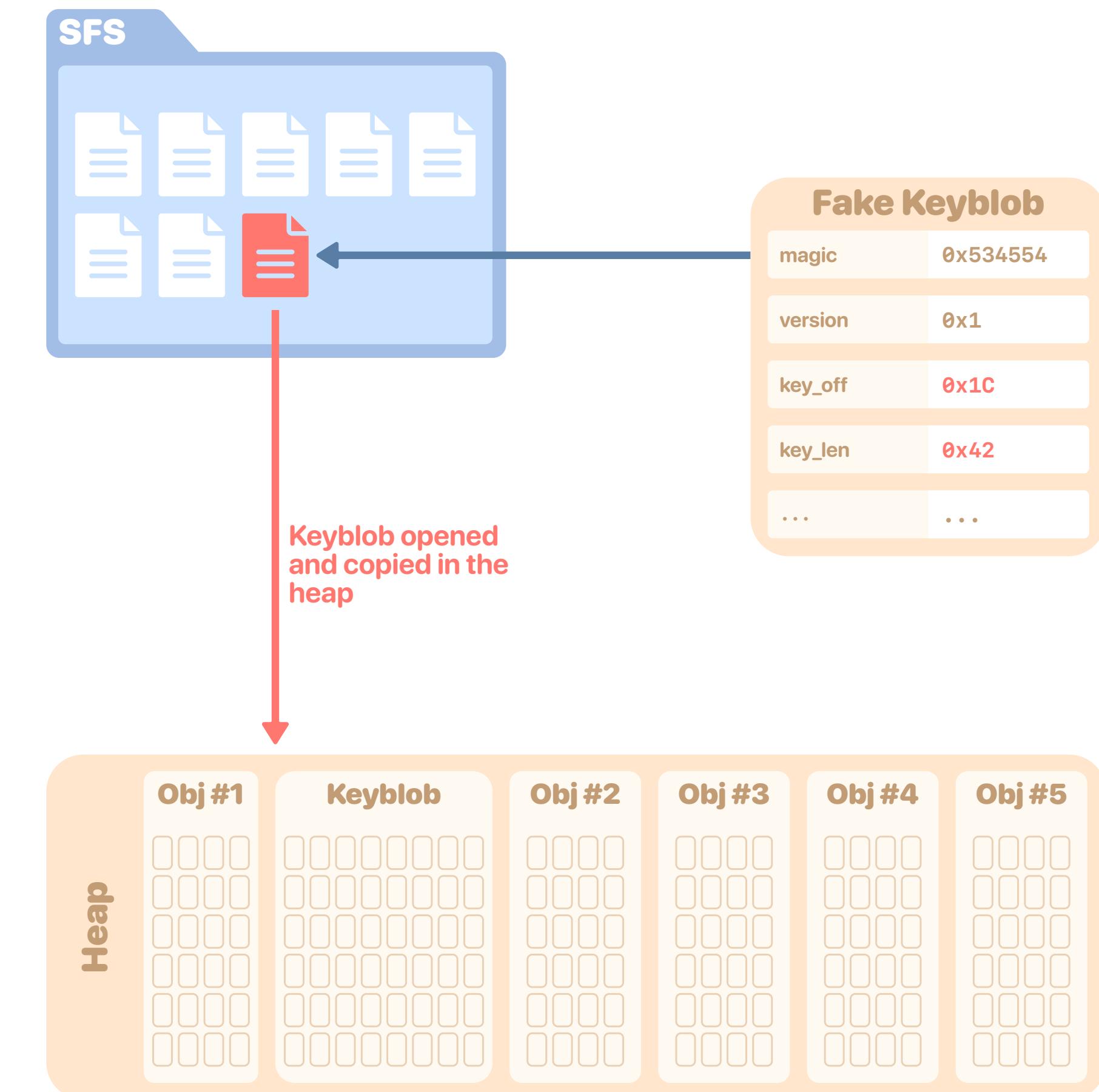
Trusted Applications

Exploitation of HW_KEYMASTER

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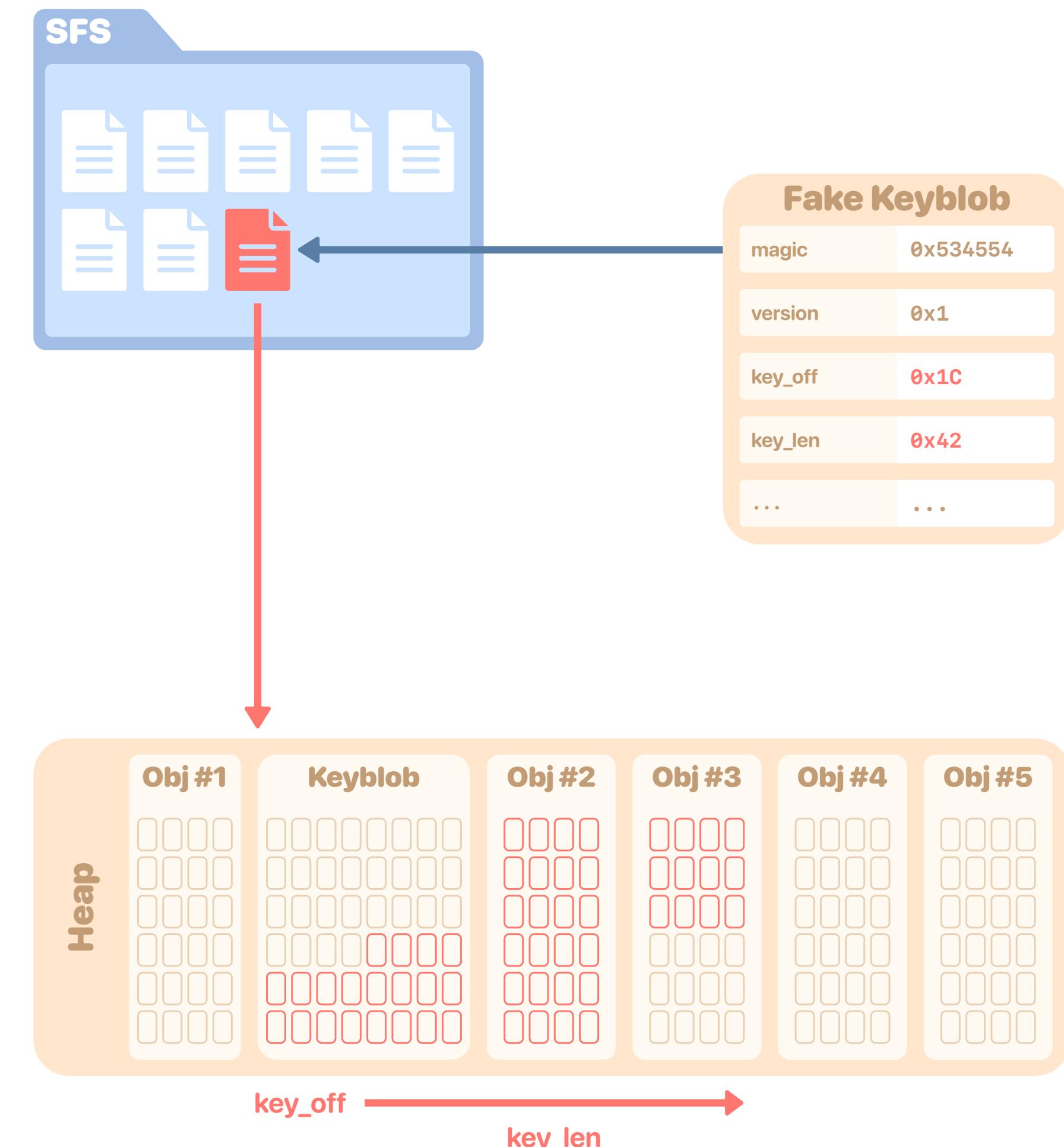
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Trusted Applications

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 - Write a “fake” keyblob to the SFS using a previously imported **all-zeroes** AES key
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 - First read adjacent heap data to get a leak of the **object's address**
 - Then you can read at arbitrary addresses, and break **ASLR** in particular



Trusted Applications

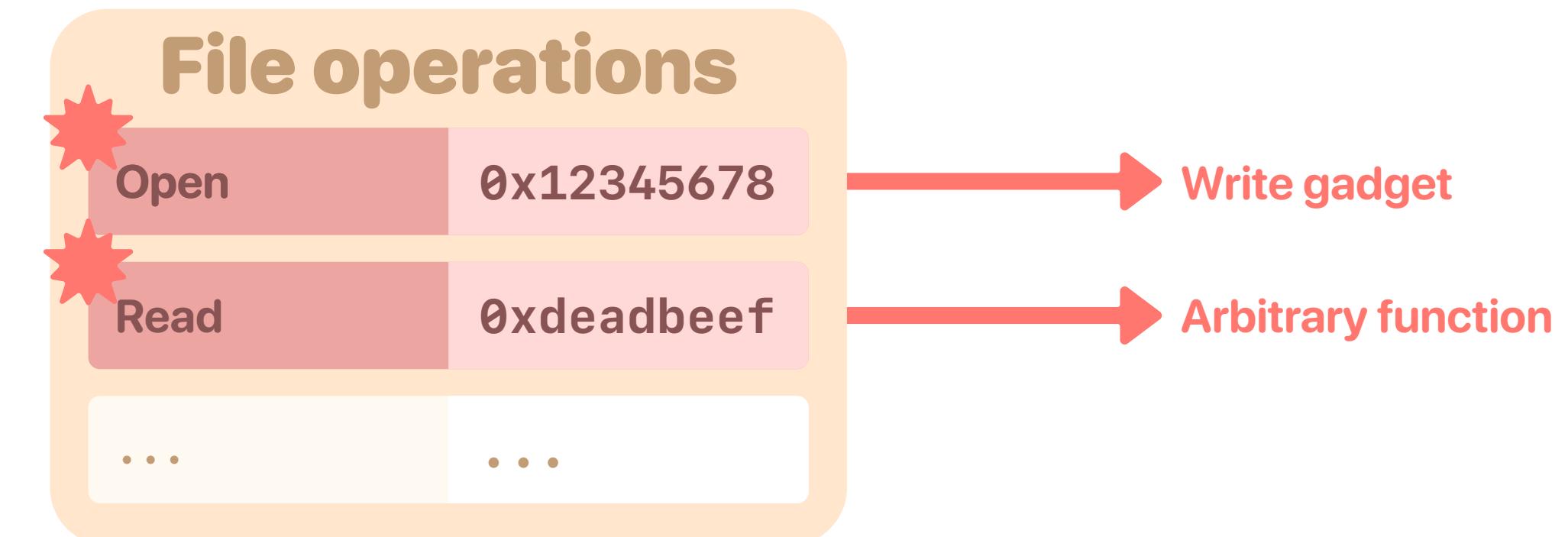
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► Arbitrary write

- Use it to overwrite a function pointer (e.g. file operations structure) to create a better arbitrary write primitive
- Can also use it to call arbitrary functions



Conclusion

Conclusion

- ▶ All vulnerabilities were reported to *Huawei Bug Bounty Program* and **fixed** in updates released prior to this presentation
- ▶ **Well thought-out** security architecture
 - Defense-in-depth measures
 - Privilege limitations and access control
 - Robust implementations (secure coding practices)
 - Mistakes can still happen, but are **mitigated**
- ▶ **Binary encryption** is a double edged-sword
 - Harder for an attacker to get access and find bugs
 - But teams with the resources to break the encryption layer might be less likely to share their findings
- ▶ **Upcoming blogposts** with the missing details
 - <https://blog.impalabs.com>



Thank you!