

TCP Attacks

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Overview

This lab report presents observations and explanations for the tasks described in the [TCP Attacks Lab](#).

In the screen shot below, you can see three VMs.

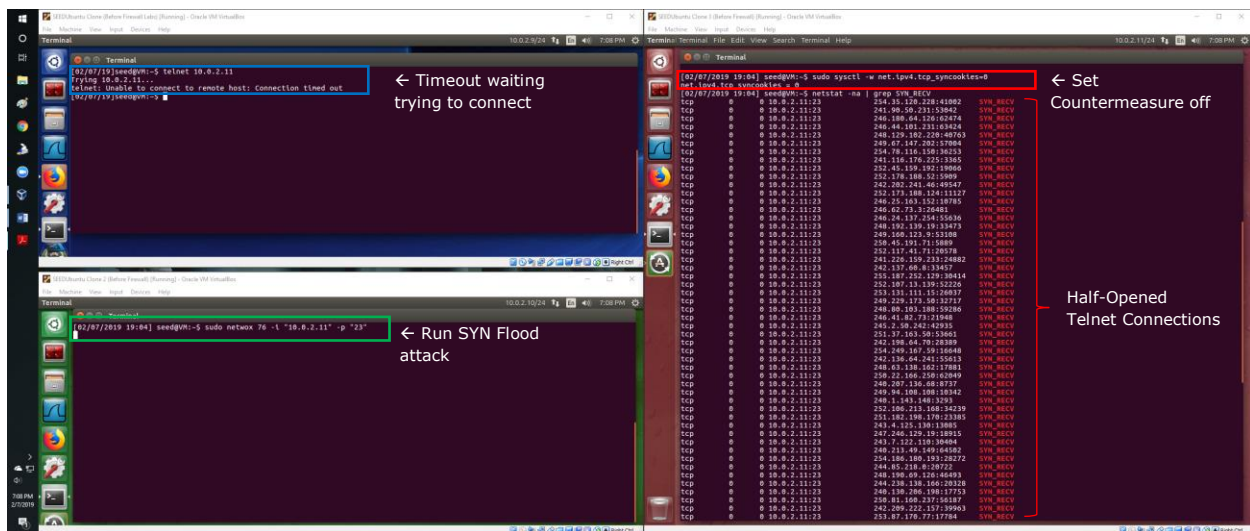
VM Background	IP Address
Blue	10.0.2.9
Green	10.0.2.10
Red	10.0.2.11

Task 1: SYN Flooding Attack

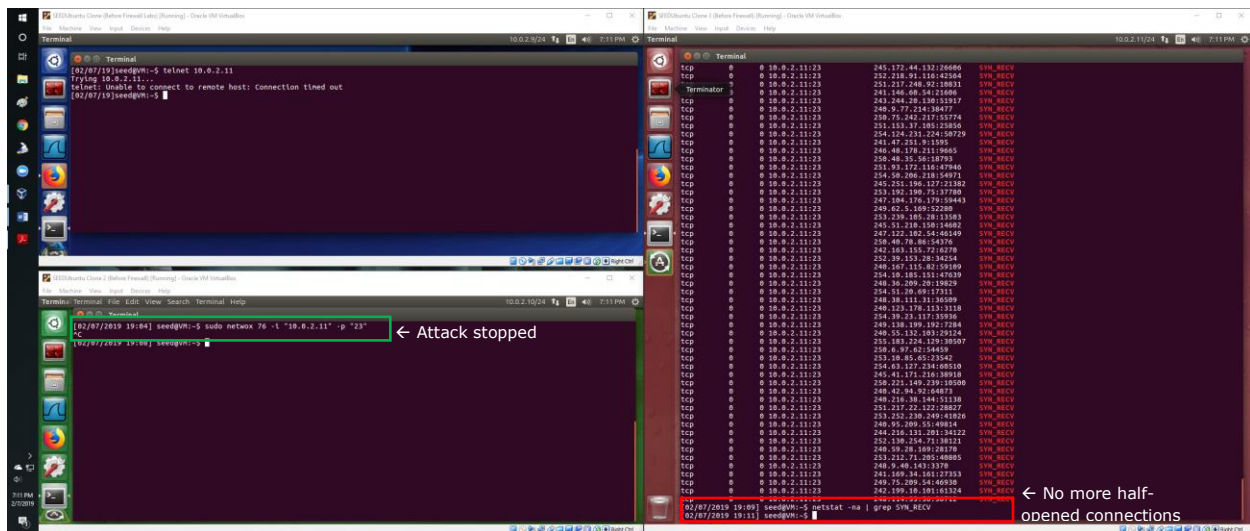
Perform the SYN Flood Attack.

This scenario used three VMs:

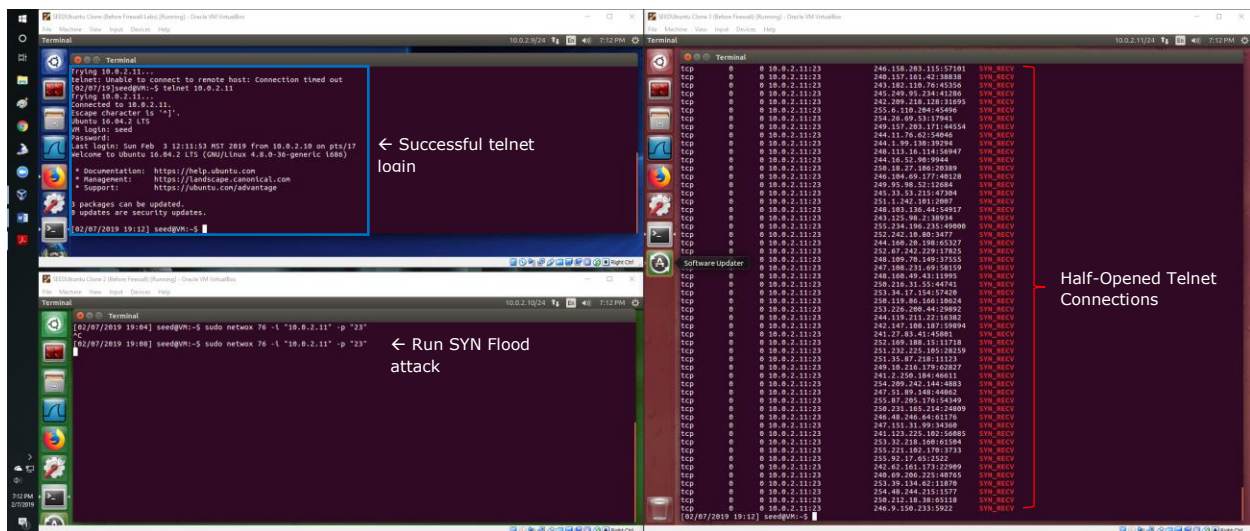
1. Red VM on right. This is the VICTIM.
 - a. Countermeasure is OFF via "sudo sysctl -w net.ipv4.tcp_syncookies=0".
 - b. We run "netstat -na" to look for the SYN_RECV state which indicates that the first part of the three way handshake has been received. Note these are coming from the Green VM which is attacking the Red VM.
2. Blue VM upper-left.
 - a. This machine is trying to telnet to the VICTIM (Red VM). The telnet attempt is denied because the ATTACKER (Green VM) is flooding SYN packets to the VICTIM.
 - b. Notice the "Connection timed out" message.
3. Green VM lower-left. This is the ATTACKER.
 - a. This machine is running netwox tool 76 which does the SYN Flood attack specifically targeting the Red VM. This floods the victims half-opened connection queue so no other VMs (e.g. Blue VM) can telnet into the Red VM's telnet server.
 - b. We specify "sudo netwox 76 -i "10.0.2.11" -p "23". This means we are running tool 76, which is the SYN Flood tool. We specify the victim machine as "10.0.2.11" which is Red VM. We also specify port 23, which is that of telnet which results in the telnet server's half-opened queue to be flooded.



Once we stop the attack (netxw), from the ATTACKER Green VM, after some time, the SYN_RECV are no longer shown. This means that after some time, the half-opened connections are closed and removed from the queue therefore telnet's connection can be honored.



We turn on countermeasure on the VICTIM Red VM 10.0.2.11. When the countermeasure is on and the ATTACKER VM still sending SYN Flood packets, we still see many SYN_RECV half-opened connection in the queue. But, because we have the countermeasure on, this situation is detected and telnet session is now successful. The countermeasure starts after some of the SYN_RECVs occur, thus detecting the condition. It then handles the queuing in its own buffer before committing it to the system's half-opened queue.



Observations / Explanations

In this task we see that by using SYN Flood attack, we can flood the half-opened queue of a particular service thus preventing clients from accessing the service. In our case, we used telnet, port 23. We use netwox to flood SYN packets to the telnet server on the VICTIM VM, thus denying another VM from telnetting to the VICTIM VM.

The SYN Cookie mechanism effectively mitigated this issue since it was able to detect when too many outstanding SYN_RECV's were in the queue and start locally queuing half-opened connections. By doing this, it was able to prevent the system's half-opened queue from filling-up and only allowing legitimate telnet client connections, who are correctly following the three-way handshake to transition to the system's half-opened queue.

Task 2: TCP Reset Attack on telnet and ssh

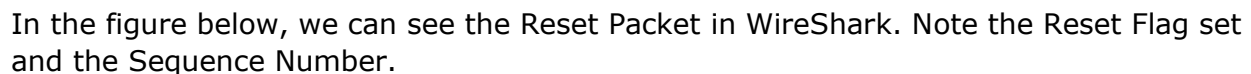
Perform the TCP Reset Attack on telnet and ssh.

Telnet Reset Attack Using netwox

In the figure below, we see three VMs.

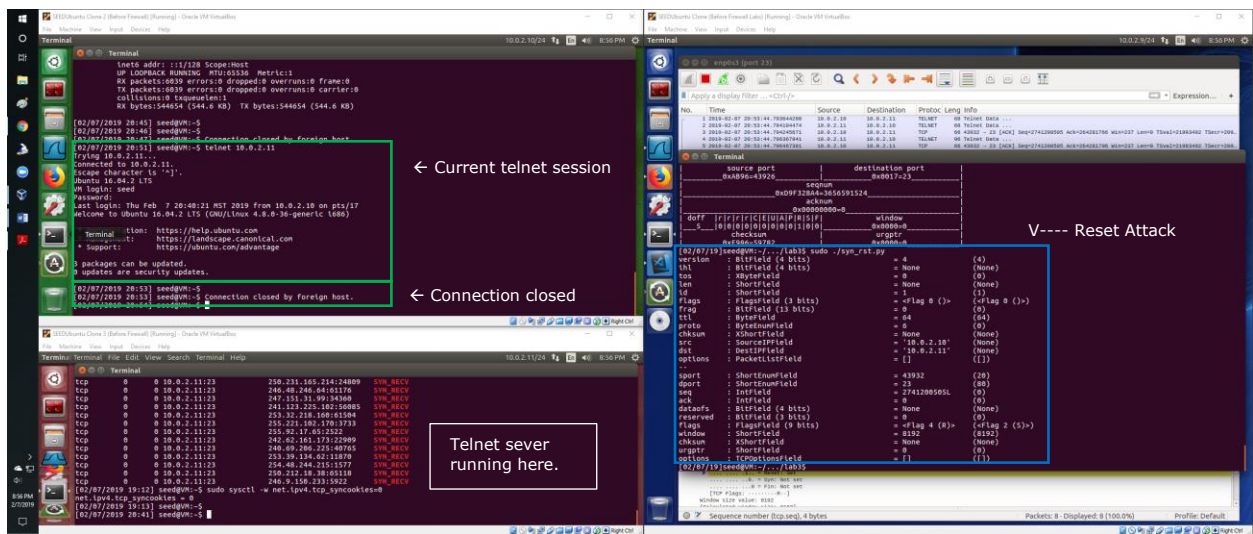
1. Green VM
 - a. This is the VICTIM VM. This VM is telnetted to the RED VM right below it.
 - b. It receives the Reset Attack from the Blue VM. Please see the message "Connection closed by foreign host".
2. Red VM
 - a. This VM is running the Telnet server.
3. Blue VM
 - a. This is the ATTACKER VM.
 - b. Execute the Reset Attack and carry out using netwox. The command line is "sudo netwox 40 -l 10.0.2.10 -m 10.0.2.11 -o 43926 -p 23 -B -q 3656591524".
 - i. netwox 40 – Spoof Ip4TCP packet

- By seeing the "Connection closed by foreign host" message in the Green VM, we know the Reset Packet attack worked.

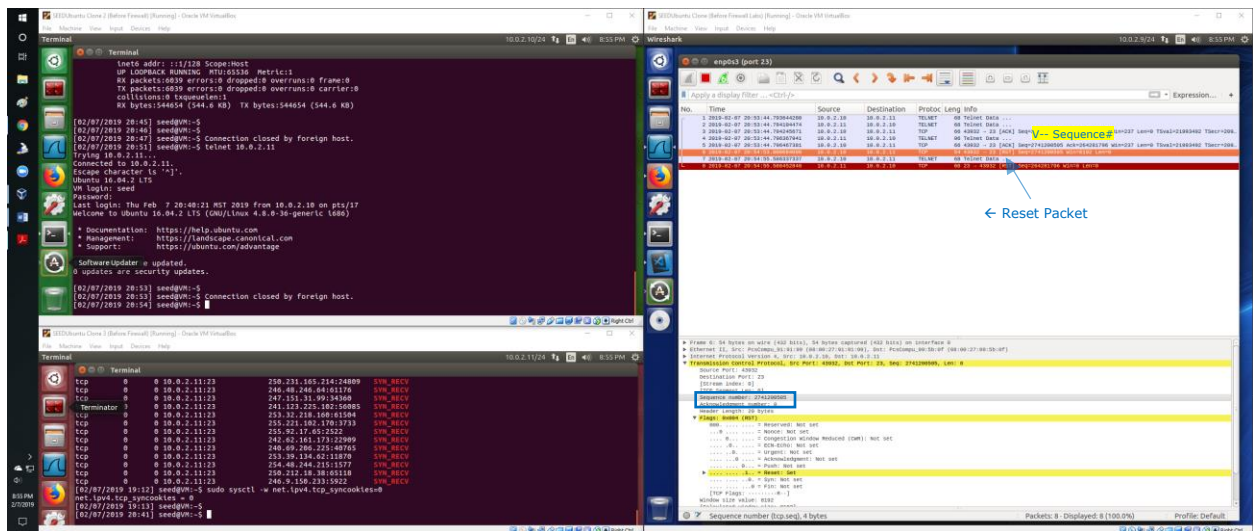


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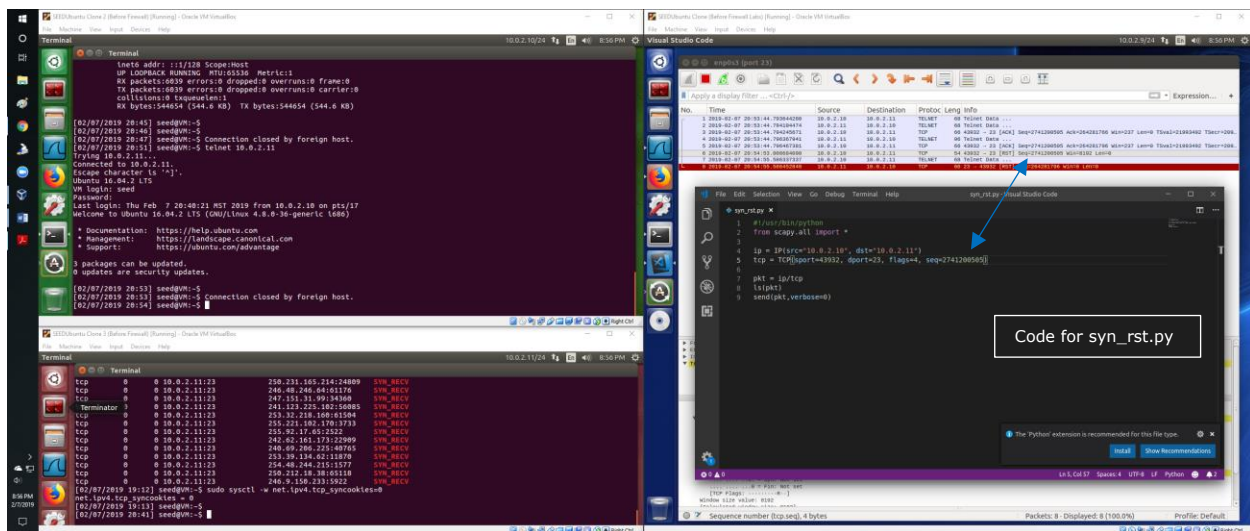
difference is that we're using scapy. In the Blue VM on the right you can see the Reset Attack (syn_rst.py). By seeing the "Connection closed by foreign host" message in the Green VM, we know the Reset Packet attack worked.



The figure below shows the reset packet in WireShark. Please note the sequence number which is shown. We use this sequence number in our attack.



The figure below shows the python code for Reset Packet attack.

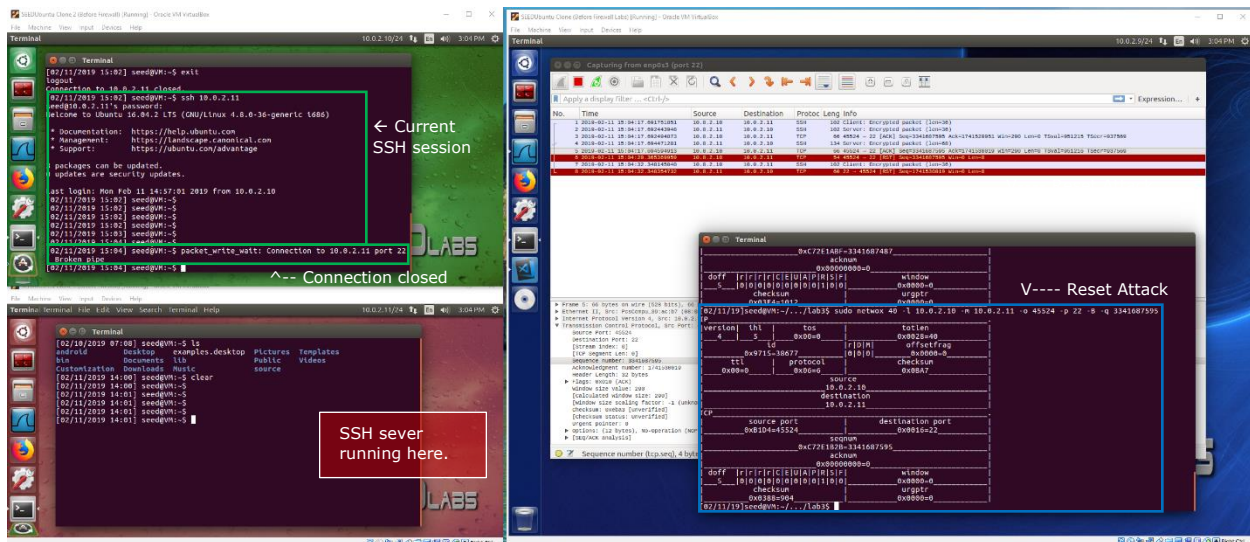


SSH Reset Packet using netwox

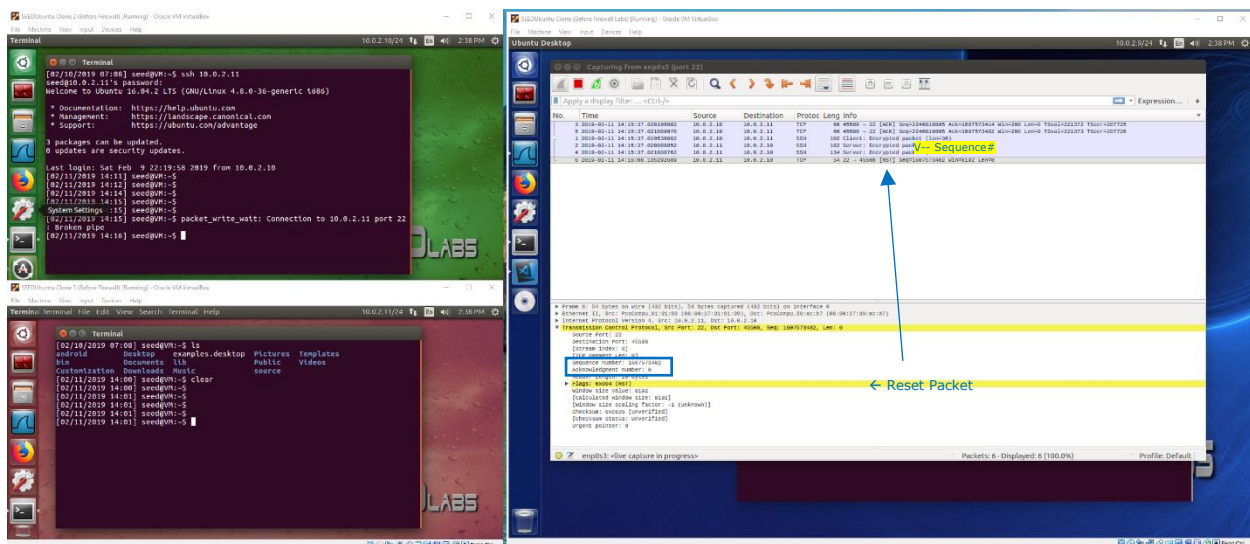
We use the same VM configuration that we've previously used in the prior attacks. In this attack:

1. We start an SSH session on the Green VM.
2. The Red VM is running the SSH server.
3. We execute the Reset Attack on the Blue VM.
4. We see the "Broken pipe" message on the Green VM.

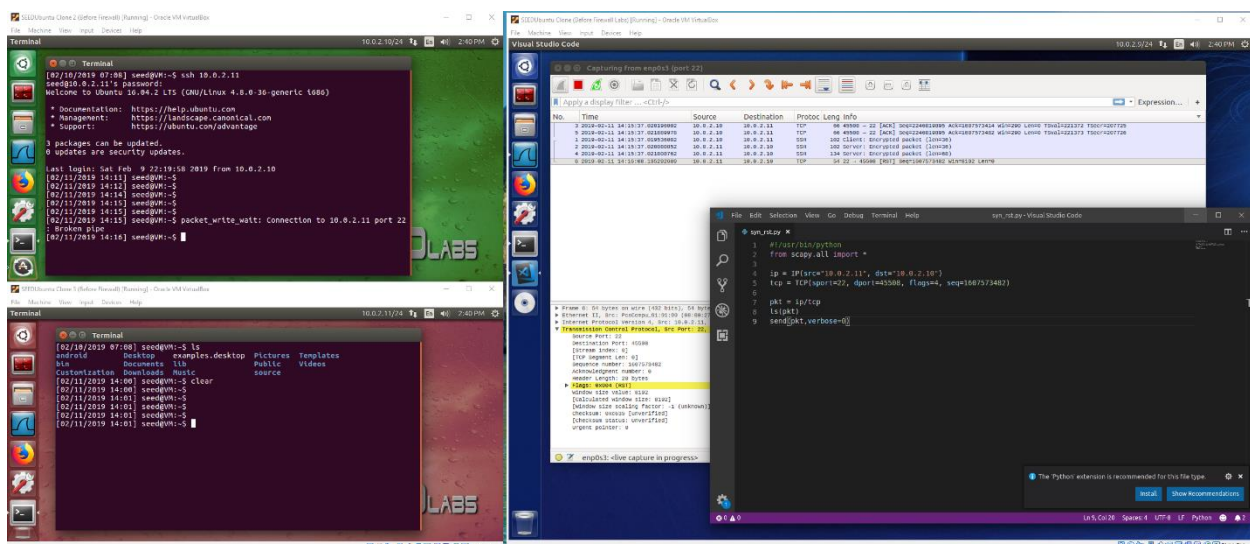
By seeing the Broken Pipe message, we know the Reset Packet attack worked.



In the figure below, we can see the Reset Packet in WireShark. Note the Reset Flag set and the Sequence Number.



The figure below shows the python code for Reset Packet attack.



Observations / Explanations

In this exercise we use the Reset Attack to send a reset packet to server in order to "hang-up" / terminate a connection for both telnet and SSH.

We used both network and Scapy to accomplish this.

The trick to either tool was to get the correct information to successfully administer the attack. For this attack, we needed source IP, destination IP, source port, destination port, sequence number and setting the RST bit in the packet. Of these, the most challenging item to get was the sequence number.

To get the sequence number, we used Wireshark to look at the last (or next available reset number) packet sent from client to server. We extracted the sequence number from here and reused it in the RST attack. By using this sequence number, we were able to use network and Scapy to spoof a TCP reset packet.

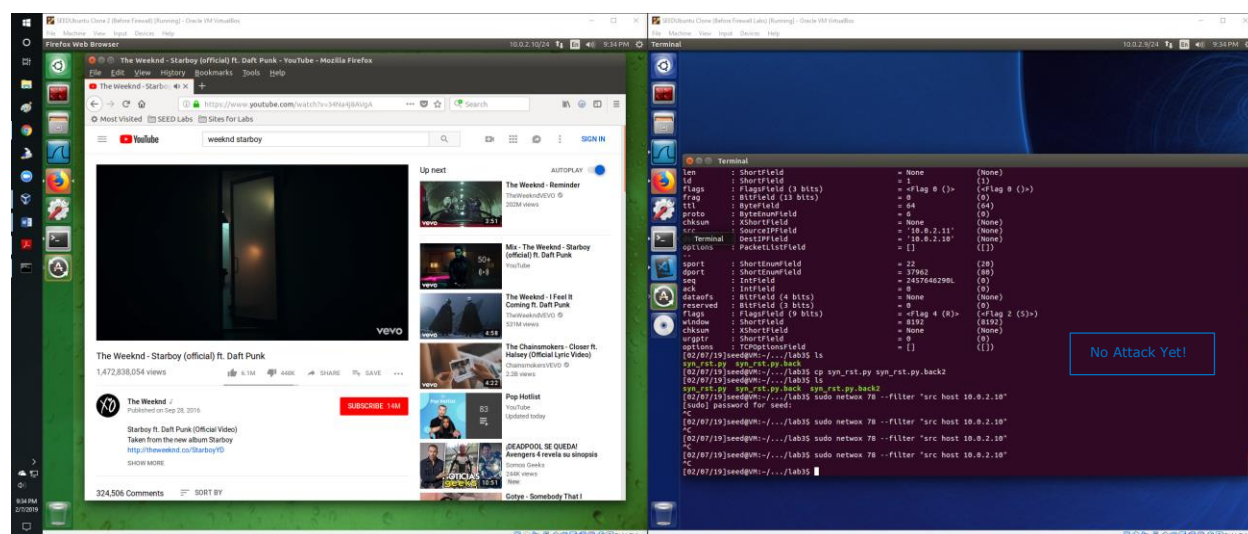
Getting the destination port was easy since that was always the server; e.g. port 23 for telnet or port 22 for SSH. Getting the client port was not very hard, but did require some look-up to know what random port the client operating was choosing for its telnet connection. Once again, we used WireShark examine the TCP packets to seen the client port number.

Bottom-line, it was simple to send a TCP Reset Attack... which is concerning. Likely larger servers and IT organization have countermeasures in place to detect these kinds of attacks, but there are probably many servers/systems which do not. It's concerning that such a vulnerability exists and can be so easily administered.

Task 3: TCP Reset Attack on Video Streaming

Use TCP Reset Attack to stop a video streaming web application from playing a video.

On the Green VM, we start a video on YouTube **before** sending the Reset attack.

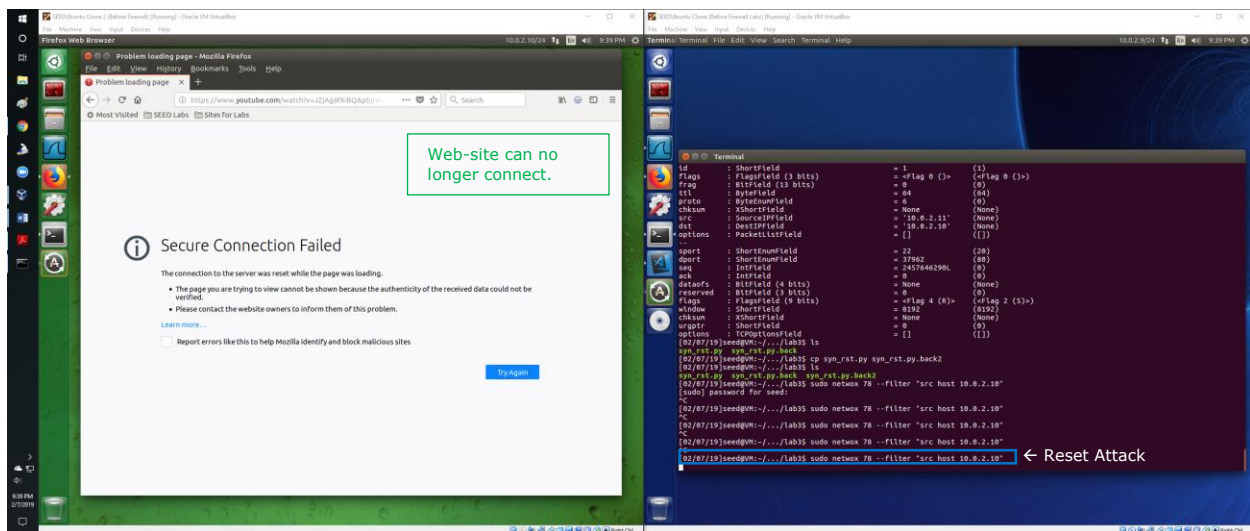


In the figure below, we send the reset attack from the Blue VM. We are resetting every packet on the GreenVM from the Blue VM. As a result, eventually, the web-site can no longer play videos. We issue the Reset Attack by executing the command "sudo netwox 78 --filter "src host 10.0.2.10"" where:

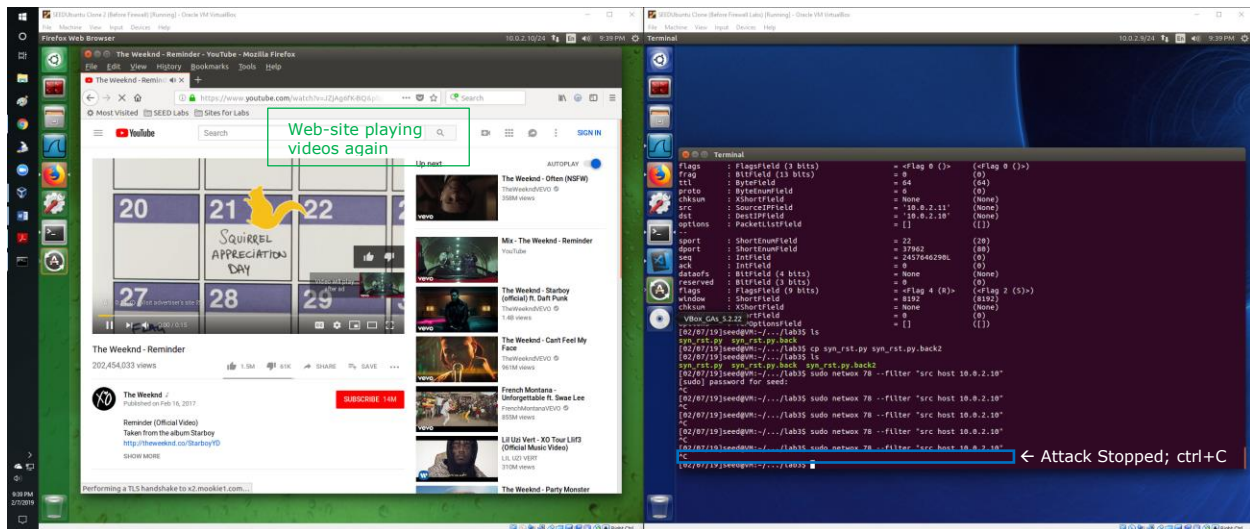
- "netwox 78" – Reset every TCP packet tool
- "--filter "host 10.0.2.10"" – This is specifying that we only want the reset packets to be sent to the system designated with the 10.0.2.10 IP address.

Once we execute the "netwox 78" command, TCP Resets are sent to all TCP packets from that host; i.e. 10.0.2.10. This includes packets responding to the video streaming web-site.

On the Green VM, we see that after some time, YouTube can no longer buffer anymore video data to play and gives an error. **By sending the RSTs and no longer seeing the video, our attack was successful!**



After killing the Reset Attack, YouTube continues again after hitting the **Try Again** button.



Observations / Explanations

This attack is the same in theory as the Task 2 TCP Reset Attack. There was one major challenge, however, and that is that the packets go back and forth between the client and server so fast that it's difficult to simply get a snap-shot of the stream to get the sequence number to spoof a reset packet.

To remedy this challenge, we specifically use networkx tool 78 which is specifically designed to send reset packets and is fast enough to keep up with TCP packet communications. We specify our host as the VICTIM so all TCP packets are scrutinized and terminated with a reset packet. By doing this, once the video buffer finishes playing, the Green VM / web browser can no longer get anymore video data... since the connections are all closed.

Task 4: TCP Session Hijacking

Use netwox and Scapy to conduct a TCP Session Hijacking attack.

TCP Session Hijacking using netwox

In this attack we use three VMs. Our scenario is such that we create a file on the Red VM which is the VM running the telnet server. The file we create is "MySecreteFile". This is simply an empty file on the root drive. We then use the Green VM to establish a telnet session with the Red VM. Finally, we use the Blue VM to perform the TCP Session Hijack. For this attack, we use a sequence number that we get from WireShark and spoof a TCP telnet packet with a payload that deletes the MySecretFile.

The VMs are described as follows:

1. Green VM
 - a. This VM is telnetted to the RED VM right below it.
 - b. This is the VICTIM VM that the Blue VM will spoof a packet from.
2. Red VM
 - a. This VM is running the Telnet server.
3. Blue VM
 - a. This is the ATTACKER VM.
 - b. Execute the TCP Session Hijack Attack and carrier it out using netwox. The command line is "sudo netwox 40 -l 10.0.2.10 -m 10.0.2.11 -j 64 -o 34532 -p 23 -q 1536360320 -E 237 -r 1450064436 -z -H "0a726d204d7953656372657446696c650a"".
 - i. netwox 40 – Spoof Ip4TCP packet
 - ii. -l 10.0.2.10 – Source IP
 - iii. -m 10.0.2.11 – Destination IP
 - iv. -j 64 – TTL value
 - v. -o 34532 – Source port
 - vi. -p 23 – Destination port
 - vii. -q 1536360320 – Sequence number
 - viii. -E 237 – TCP window
 - ix. -r 1450064436 – TCP ACK number
 - x. -z – TCP ACK specified
 - xi. -H "0a726d204d7953656372657446696c650a" – TCP data. Details of the data explained below.
 - c. Basically, the Blue VM is spoofing a TCP telnet packet which will be sent on behalf of the telnet client to the telnet server. This packet will contain the hex payload represented by the -H parameter and explained below.

The data bytes we use are encoded as follows

Since we use the "-H" parameter in netwox for the command we wish to put into the spoofed TCP telnet packet, we need to encode the textual representation into HEX form. We use python to help with this.

```
>>> "\nrm MySecretFile\n".encode("hex")
'0a726d204d7953656372657446696c650a'
>>>
```


Our command is "\nrm MySecretFile\n". Basically, we are hijacking the telnet session and removing the MySecretFile that exists in the Red VM's root directory. We use the "\n" before the "rm" so that any prior text or partial commands are executed/cleared-out. We use the "\n" at the end to ensure our command is executed.

The Red VM below shows the creation of MySecret file and that it exists in the root directory.

```

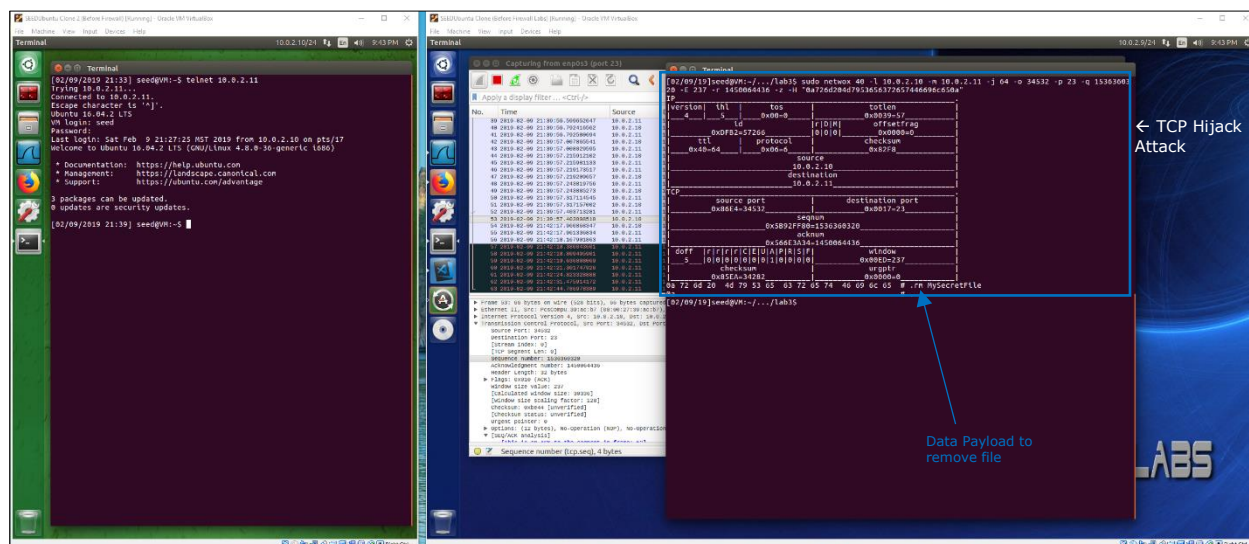
[02/09/2019 21:36] seed@VM:~$ ls -l
total 64
drwxrwxr-x 4 seed seed 4096 Apr 30 2018 android
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jan 14 2018 bin
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jan 14 2018 Customization
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Desktop
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Documents
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 May 9 2018 Downloads
-rw-r--r-- 1 seed seed 8980 Jul 25 2017 examples.desktop
drwxrwxr-x 3 seed seed 4096 May 8 2018 lib
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Music
drwxrwxr-x 3 seed seed 4096 Jan 14 2018 Pictures
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Public
drwxrwxr-x 4 seed seed 4096 May 8 2018 source
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Templates
drwxrwxr-x 2 seed seed 4096 Jul 25 2017 Videos
[02/09/2019 21:36] seed@VM:~$ touch MySecretFile
[02/09/2019 21:36] seed@VM:~$ ls -l MySecretFile
-rw-rw-r-- 1 seed seed 0 Feb 2 21:36 MySecretFile
[02/09/2019 21:36] seed@VM:~$
  
```

In the figure below, we see that the Green VM (10.0.2.10) has telnetted into the Red VM (10.0.2.11). In the Blue VM, the ATTACKER VM, we get the sequence number and additional (ACK, TTL, Window) parameters we need to specify for the TCP spoof.

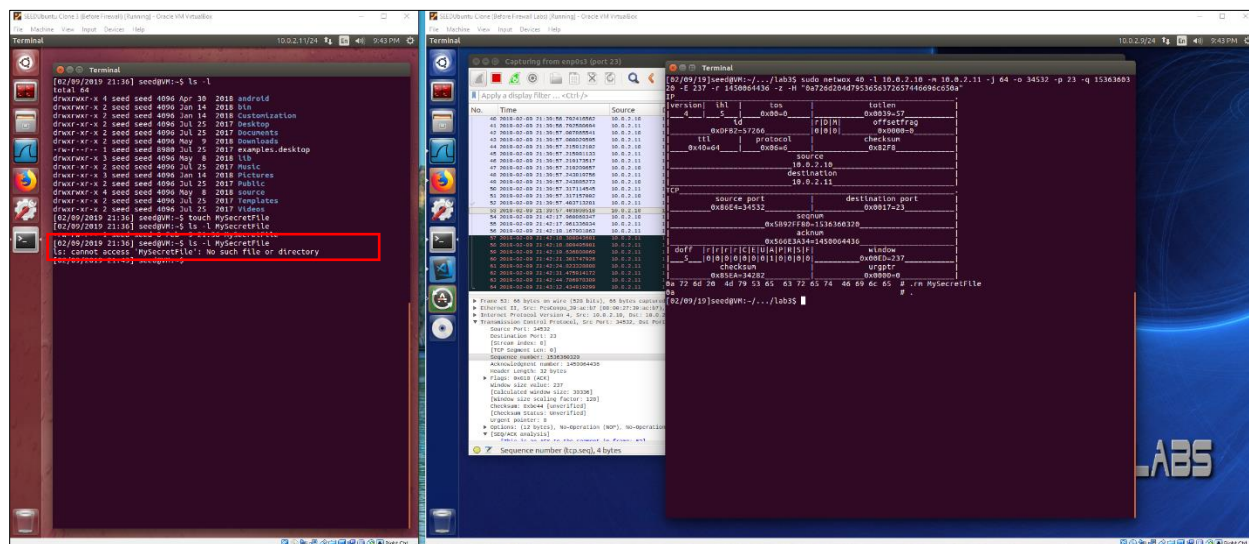
The left screenshot shows a terminal window in a Green VM where a telnet session has been established with the Red VM (10.0.2.11). The output shows the user 'seed' logging in and the system prompt changing to 'seed@VM:~\$'.

The right screenshot shows a Wireshark packet capture on the attacker's interface (eth0). It displays a list of captured packets, with a specific packet selected. The packet details pane shows the TCP header information, including the sequence number (3401450000), acknowledgment number (3401450000), and window size (65535). The packet bytes pane shows the raw data of the packet, which is a spoofed TCP reset (RST) packet.

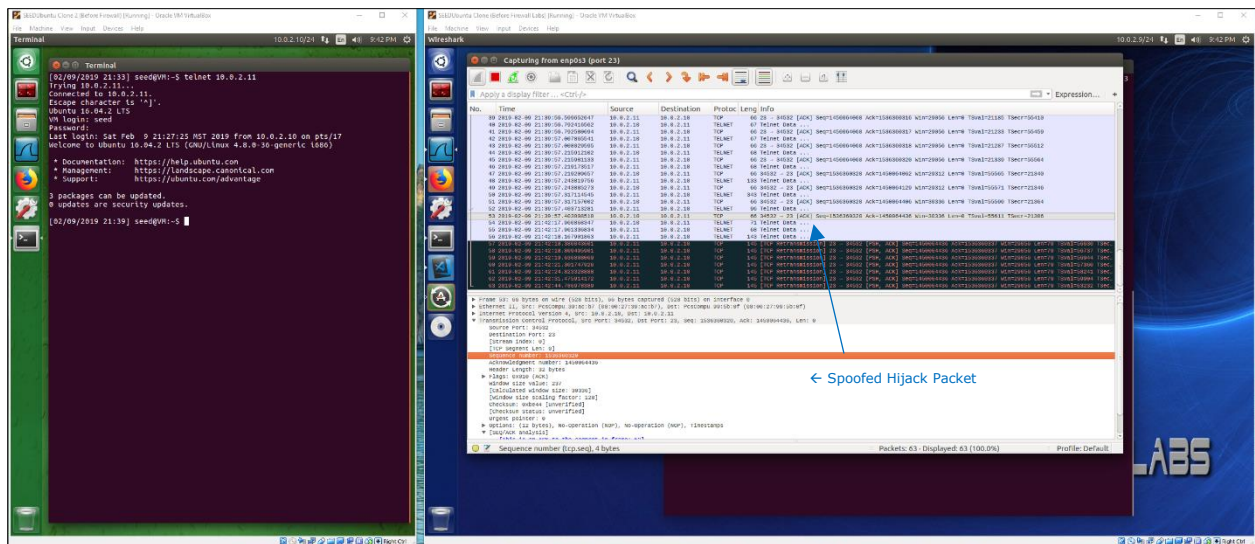
In the figure below, we see the Blue VM execute the TCP Hijack attack.



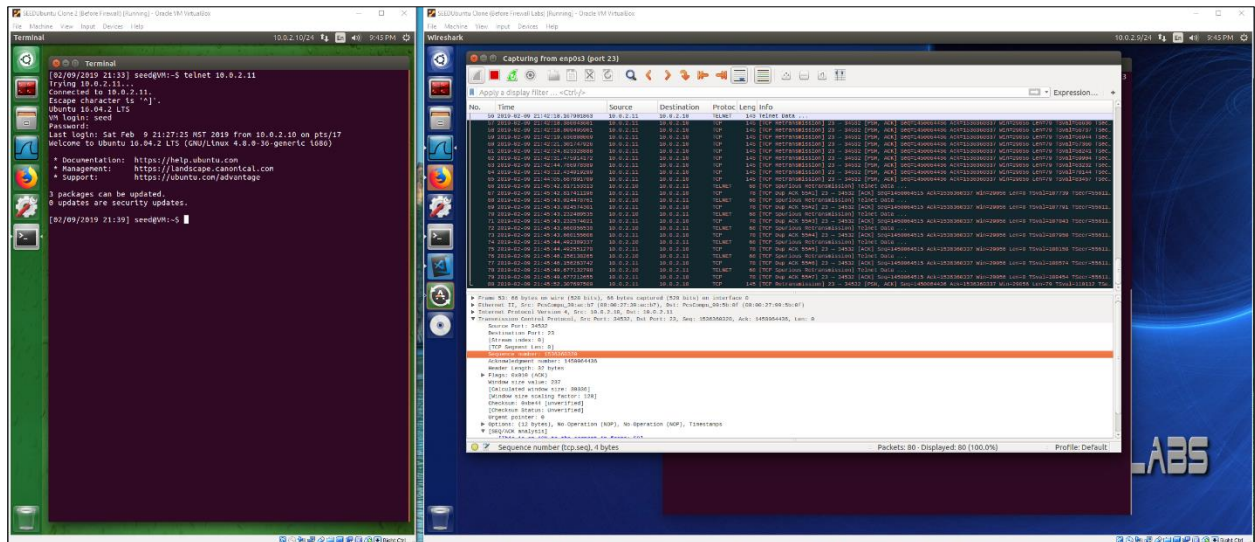
In the figure below, we see that when we check the Red VM (telnet server) for the MySecretFile, it no longer exists. **Therefore, our attack was successful!**



In the figure below, we see the WireShark trace on the Blue VM. We also see TCP Retransmissions that started up because we spoofed a packet on behalf of Green VM and Red VM is waiting for an ACK from Green VM, but it never gets it so it keep sending the same packet over and over again.



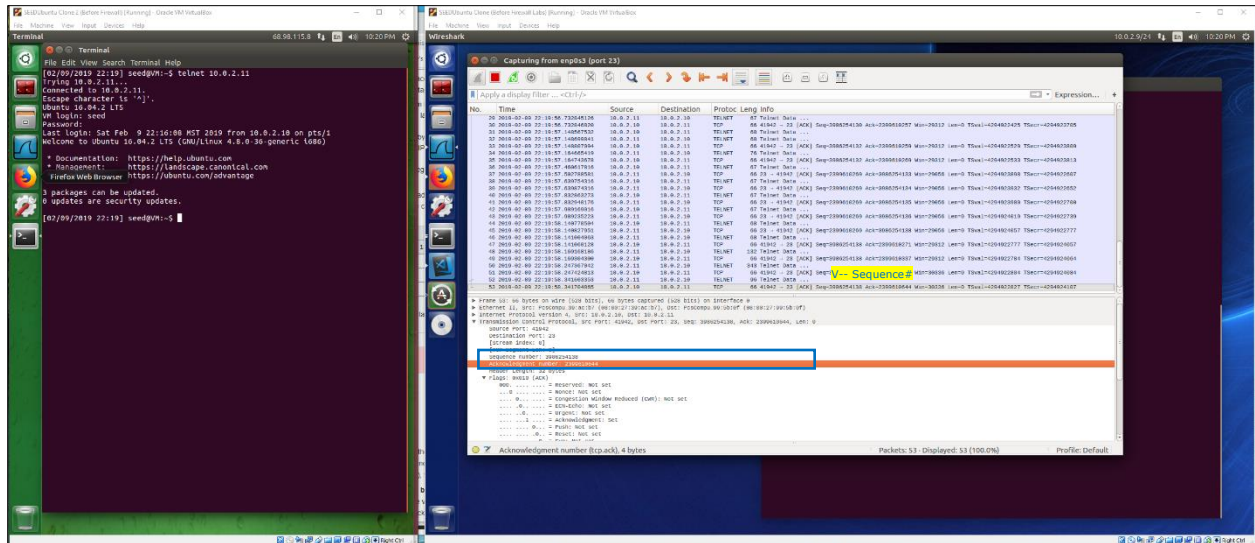
I hit enter in the telnet session in the Green VM just to see if it was alive. By doing this, we caused more TCP Retransmission errors as observed by WireShark – this time from 10.0.2.10 to 10.0.2.11. We get these because the Green VM is using the sequence number which we already hijacked and the server, Red VM, is not accepting it.



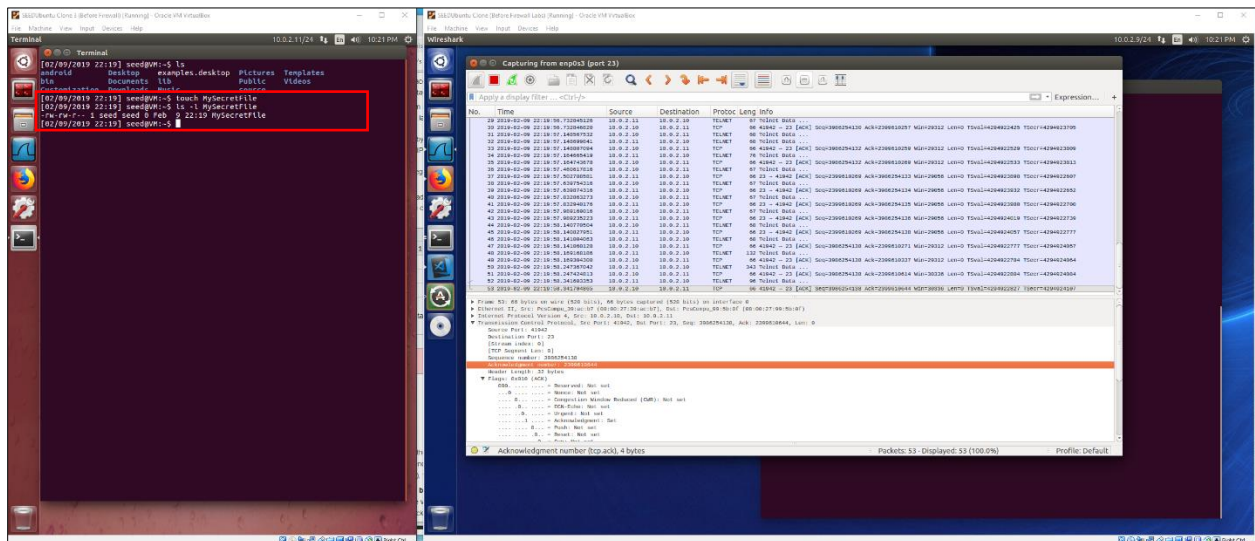
TCP Session Hijacking using Scapy

We use the same scenario and VM configuration as we did with the TCP Hijacking netwox attack.

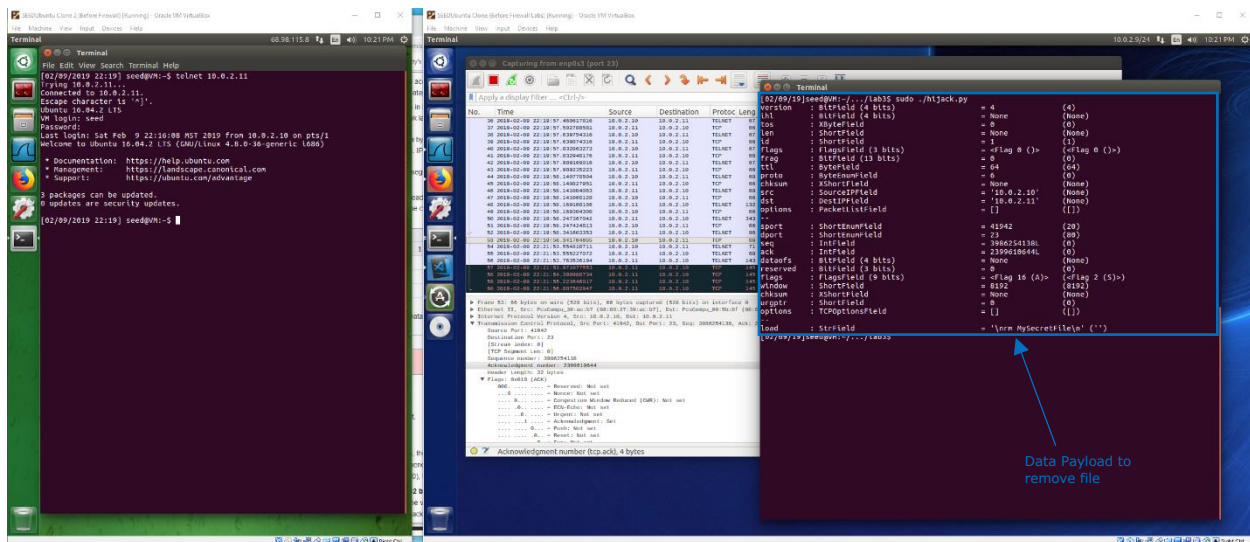
In the figure below, the Green VM on the left is telnetting into Red VM. On the right, is WireShark packets filtering for port 23. We can also see the sequence number and acknowledgement number which we will use in our attack.



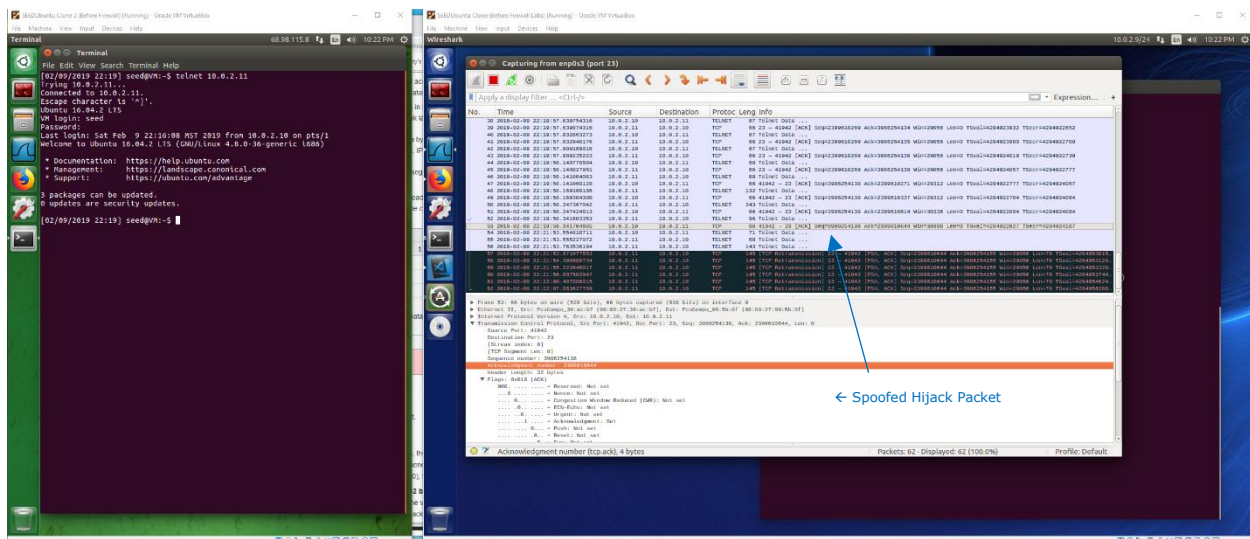
On the left we see Red VM, which is the telnet server. Here we create a file "MySecretFile" on the root directory.



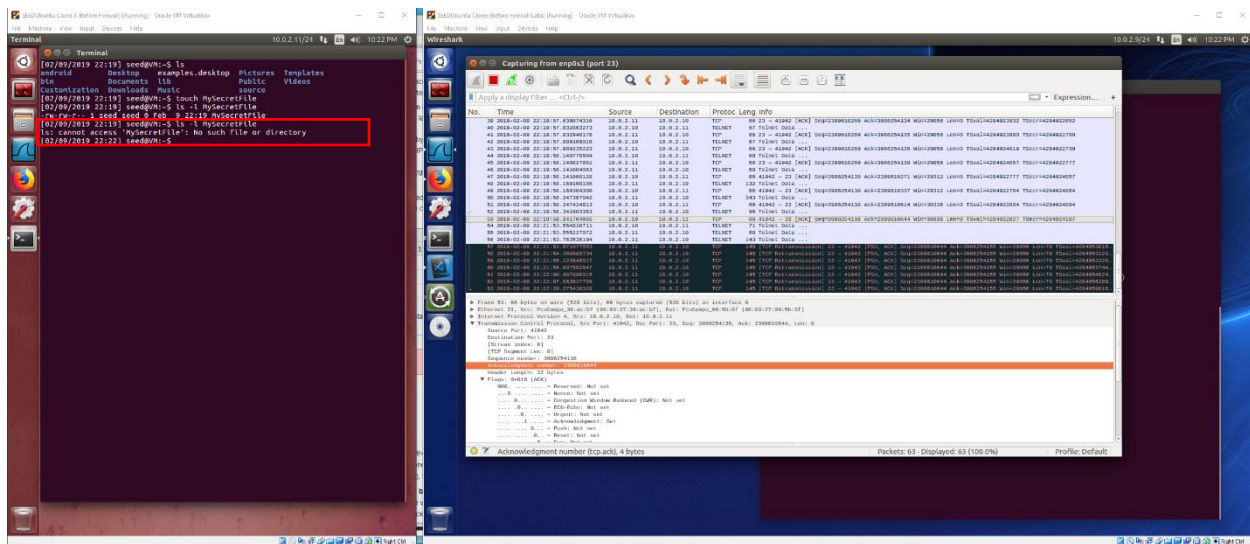
On the right in the Blue VM, we execute the attack using hijack.py.



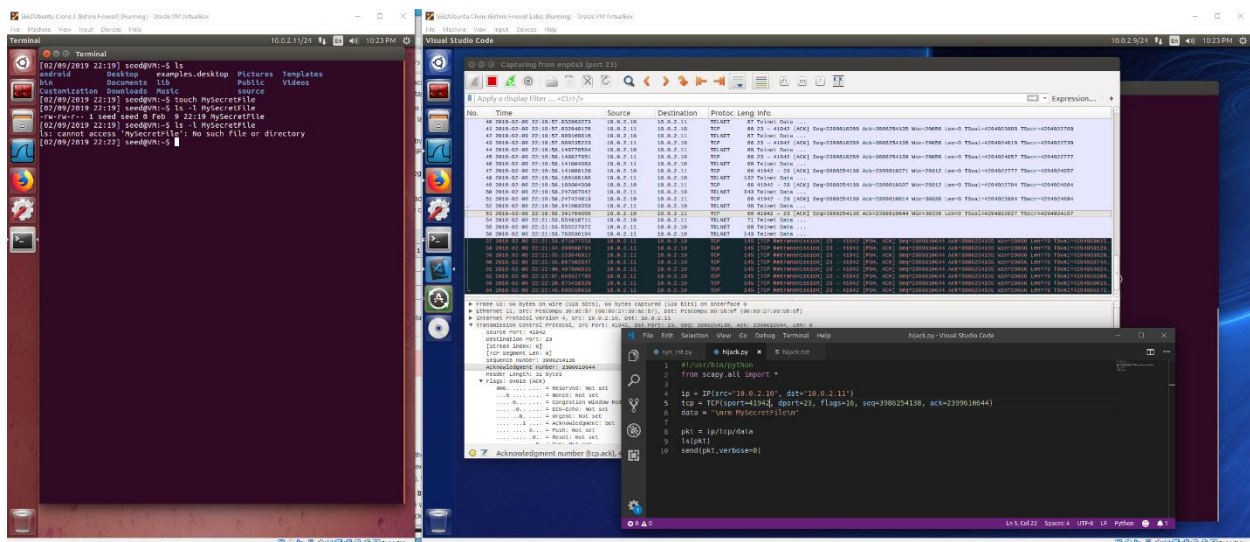
On the Blue VM, we see the retransmissions from the server since the client is rejecting packets from sequence numbers it did not send.



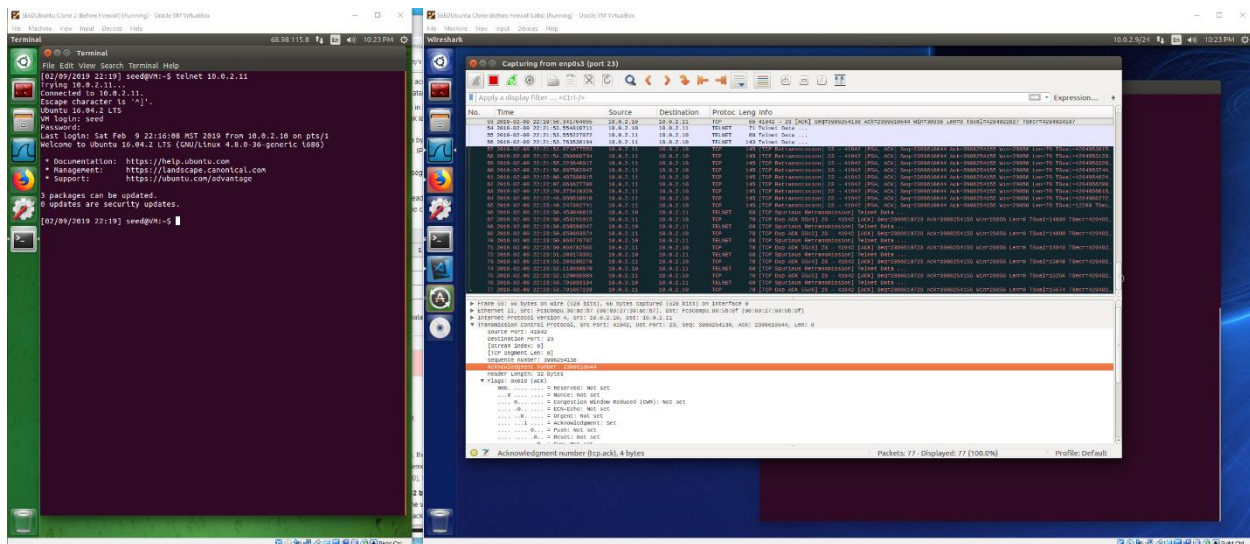
On the left side, Red VM, we see that the file is no longer there. **The attack worked!** We also see TCP Retransmissions that started up because we spoofed a packet on behalf of Green VM and Red VM is waiting for an ACK from Green VM, but it never gets it so it keep sending the same packet over and over again.



In the Blue VM, we can see the code for the hijack.py Scapy attack.



On the Blue VM, we see more retransmission after we hit enter on the telnet session. This time from 10.0.2.10 to 10.0.2.11. We get these because the Green VM is using the sequence number which we already hijacked and the server, Red VM, is not accepting it.



Observations / Explanations

In this part of the lab, we executed a TCP Session Hijack using both netwox and Scapy. Similar to the prior exercises, we spoofed a TCP packet. BUT, unlike the previous exercises, we added a malicious payload to the TCP telnet packet. Our malicious packet was able to take advantage of the values sniffed from Wireshark to get the sequence number and port numbers, especially for the OS picked local telnet port. There were other fields that were required, mainly for netwox to work correctly including – TTL, ACK number, and window size.

For both netwox and Scapy, we specified the payload to remove the MySecretFile. For netwox, we specified it as a hex string and for Scapy, we just specified it as text string. Either way, we were able to spoof the packet and remove the MySecretFile file.