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## ELEC 570 – Project II: Investigating Blackmailing



**(Weight: 30%; Due: July 13, 2017)**

### Case Description

Alicia Peabody is a key executive for a major retailer who had been contacted by an unknown person that stated he had in his possession some compromising pictures and letters of her and her exboyfriend. Alicia is married and had had an affair with that boyfriend. The suspect provided proof of possession of the documents by sending by email a copy of the handwritten signature of Alicia that she usually uses to sign her correspondences. The suspect then threatened Alicia with exposing the letters and pictures, unless she would pay a ransom. Alicia who is concerned not only with her reputation at work, but also with protecting her marriage, reported in confidence the threat to the police. In her police report, she indicated that she suspected that the blackmailer was none other than the exboyfriend himself, since the relationship didn't end up well. She indicated that she believes that the compromising material in possession of the ex-boyfriend consist of **2 love letters and 1 compromising picture of both of them.**

The police invited for an interview the suspected boyfriend, whose name is John Lewis. Mr. Lewis denied being the blackmailer, and also claimed that he has even deleted from his computer all letters and pictures about Alicia immediately after the breakup. He also indicated that he doesn't know anything about Jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com, the email address used by the suspected blackmailer. As the answers provided by Mr. Lewis raised more suspicion, he was asked and agreed to take a polygraph examination. He failed the polygraph examination, which prompted the police to obtain a search warrant and seize his PC. The disk image of the computer was acquired as part of the evidentiary items.

The blackmail email, and sample regular emails exchanged between Ms. Peabody and Mr. Lewis, were collected and added to the evidence.

### Task

As forensic expert, you are tasked with investigating whether there is enough evidence to support the claim that John Lewis is the blackmailer.

**The disk image with corresponding hashes and additional evidence can be downloaded here:**

The size of the uncompressed folder is 59.8 Gb. Therefore, it is expected that download would take several hours. It took about 37hrs to upload the image to Google drive with high speed Internet.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1xnRxT-Y8DMMnZhRUs3YzI0RWs/view?usp=sharing>

Your task is to analyze the evidence, and extract all the relevant data for the investigation. You are expected to document your findings in a forensic report to be given to the police (and submitted as your answer to the assignment). A forensic report is a step-by-step list of everything

you have done and what the results were. You don't need to actually list all of the failed attempts or crowd it with non-relevant facts. Keep it accurate, relevant and simple.

Ensure that you answer in particular the following questions that the police are interested in:

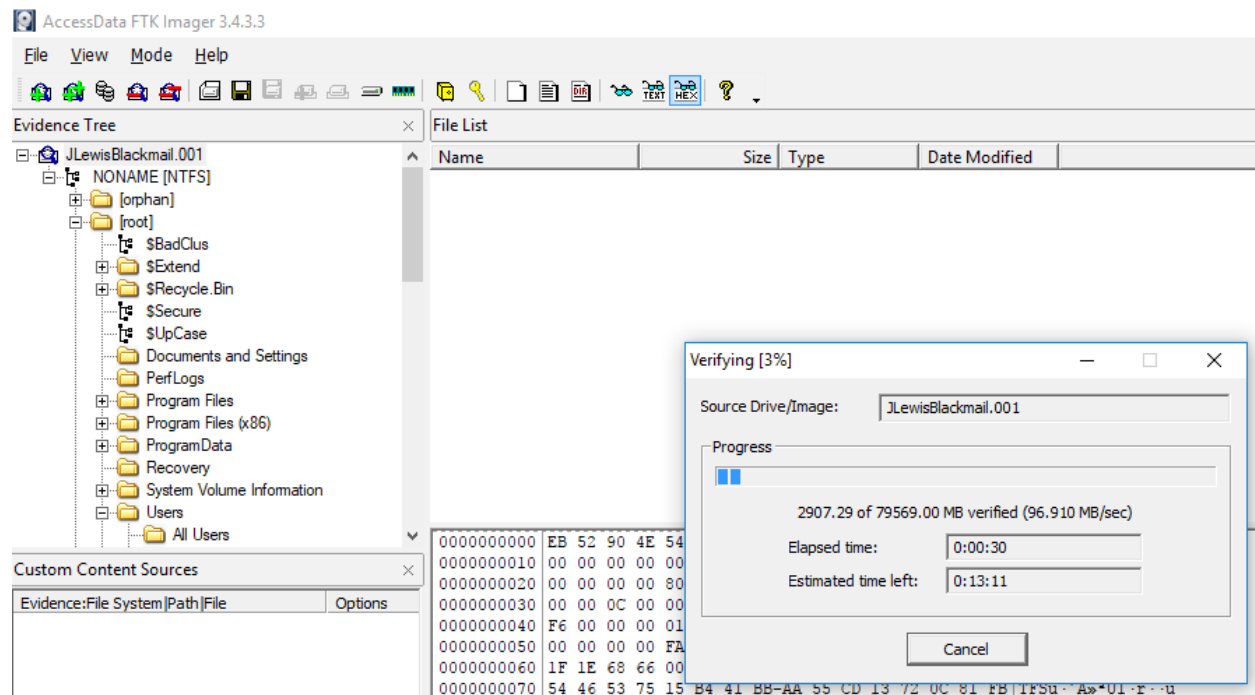
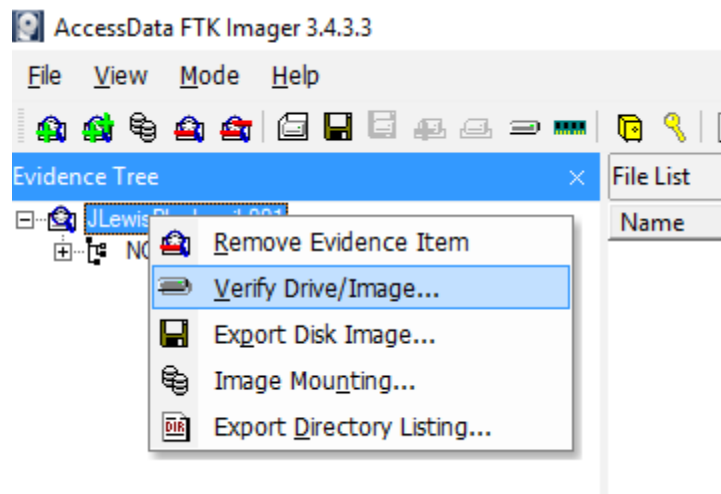
1. Check the validity of the forensic image using the supplied hashes. [1%]

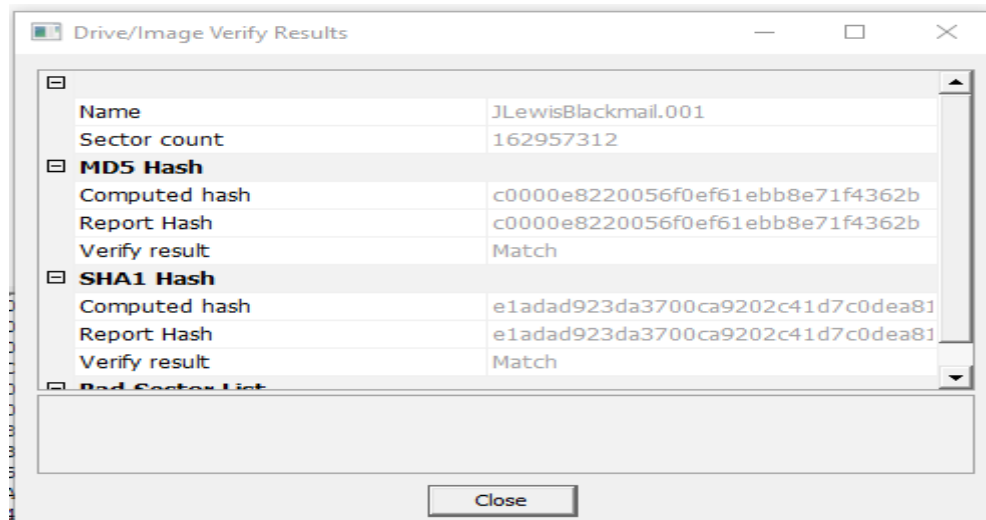
Answer:

To check the validity of forensic image we need to verify that the computed hash and reported hash values should match for MD5 Hash and SHA1 Hash and verify the result as match.

We can do this as follows:

Right click on the image we want to verify as valid.





From the image above it is seen that the MD5 and SHA1 Hash values are matched for hash values. So the disk image acquired is valid.

2. What crucial data are available on the seized device? Indicate the specific files that contain such data and explain the importance of the different pieces of information for the investigation. All relevant information must be identified. Explain what processes did you (the investigator) used to successfully examine the image and uncover the evidence, by highlighting explicitly the logical process or thought that led to the discovery of the relevant information. [15%]

Answer:

We have used AccessData's FTK Imager to do disk imaging.

Step 1: run FTK Imager.exe to start the tool. Then upload the image and we can see all the files in the evidence tree on the left hand side of the FTK imager window.

As given in the assignment as HINT we are focusing on the deleteme folder which is suspects home folder as follows

Root-> users->deleteme

Evidence 1:

Root->users->Deleteme->AppData->Roaming->Thunderbird->Profiles->7pmuzc6a.default->ImapMail->imap.mail.com->Sent-1

When we viewed this file in automatic (IE) mode we found that the blackmailer has put [Jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com](mailto:Jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com) in the CC and the original sender is Mr Lewis with email Id [jlewis2016@mail.com](mailto:jlewis2016@mail.com) and when he was investigated he told that he doesn't know anything about the [Jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com](mailto:Jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com) email id . From here we can illustrate blackmailer might be Mr. Lewis because he put this email in the cc first then used the same email id to send Ms. Alicia the blackmailing email just to hide him, or it is a close or hired person but for sure to whom he sent the love letters and compromised picture of both of them so that he can blackmail Ms. Alicia, Mr. Lewis is for sure involved.

File List

Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
INBOX.msft.FileSlack	4	File Slack	
msgFilterRules.dat	1	Regular File	21-12-2016 05:...
OUTBOX.msft	2	Regular File	21-12-2016 05:...
OUTBOX.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
Sent-1	156	Regular File	21-12-2016 05:...
Sent-1.msft	11	Regular File	22-12-2016 23:...
Sent-1.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	

AccessData FTK Imager 3.4.3.3

File View Mode Help

Evidence Tree

- Adobe
- Macromedia
- Microsoft
- Mozilla
- Skype
- Thunderbird
  - Crash Reports
  - Profiles
    - 7pmuzc6a.def
      - calendar-d
      - crashes
      - datareporti
      - extensions
      - ImapMail
      - imap.r
      - Mail
      - minidumps

File List

Choose IE, text, or hex viewer automatically

Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
\$I30	4	NTFS Index All...	2016-12-21 5:1...
Archives.msft	2	Regular File	2016-12-22 11:...
Archives.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
Drafts-1.msft	2	Regular File	2016-12-21 5:0...
Drafts-1.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
Drafts.msft	2	Regular File	2016-12-21 5:0...
Drafts.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
INBOX	1,236	Regular File	2016-12-22 11:...
INBOX.msft	61	Regular File	2016-12-22 11:...
INBOX.msft.FileSlack	4	File Slack	
msgFilterRules.dat	1	Regular File	2016-12-21 5:0...
OUTBOX.msft	2	Regular File	2016-12-21 5:0...
OUTBOX.msft.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
Sent-1	156	Regular File	2016-12-21 5:1...
Sent-1.msft	11	Regular File	2016-12-22 11:...

Custom Content Sources

Evidence:File System|Path|File Options

From

Subject: Re: Phishing Attack Hits Saudi Govt Networks With Disk-Wiping Malware

To: stu.sjouwerman@knowbe4.com

References: <1480783650684.81eba0c5-6bda-4548-b5ec-5b625bd4b649@smtp.hubapi.com>

Cc: jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com

From: John Lewis <JLewis2016@mail.com>

Message-ID: <c3d373ff-08e8-b261-40b2-d7b2c9c9ff6c@mail.com>

Date: Tue, 20 Dec 2016 21:11:11 -0800

User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64; rv:45.0) Gecko/20100101

Evidence 2:

deleteme->documents->dokono->financials.xlsx

When we browsed the financial.xlsx in the HEX mode which is saved as .xlsx which is the extension of EXCEL, then we noticed the "JFIF" tag which is characteristic of JPEG file. Also at the beginning of the file constant byte values 0xFF D8 which always mark the start of the image (SOI) of a JPEG file as shown in the figure below.

AccessData FTK Imager 3.4.3.3

File View Mode Help

Evidence Tree

- defaultuser0
  - deleteme
    - AppData
    - Application Data
    - Contacts
    - Cookies
    - Desktop
    - Documents
      - dokono
        - gardening
        - My Music
        - My Pictures
        - My Programs
        - My Videos
        - other\_docs
      - Downloads
      - Favorites
      - Links

File List

Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
\$I30	4	NTFS Index All...	2016-12-21 9:4...
Balance Sheet Dokono...	13	Regular File	2016-11-18 5:3...
Balance Sheet Dokono...	4	File Slack	
Dokono Systems Inc. ...	35	Regular File	2016-11-17 10:...
Dokono Systems Inc. ...	1	File Slack	
Dokono_Systems_Mee...	40	Regular File	2016-11-18 6:0...
Dokono_Systems_Mee...	1	File Slack	
financials.xlsx	94	Regular File	2016-12-03 4:2...
financials.xlsx.FileSlack	3	File Slack	
Income Statement Do...	12	Regular File	2016-11-18 5:3...
Income Statement Do...	1	File Slack	

Custom Content Sources

Evidence:File System|Path|File Options

000000 FF D8 EF E0 00 10 4A 46-49 46 00 01 01 01 00 48 y0y0 JFIF ...H

000010 00 48 00 00 FF E2 0C 58-49 43 43 5F 50 52 4F 46 -H-ya-XICC\_PROF

000020 49 4C 45 00 01 01 00 00-0C 48 4C 69 6E 6F 02 10 ILE...HLino

000030 00 00 6D 6E 74 72 52 47-42 20 58 59 5A 20 07 CE -mnrRGB XYZ i

000040 00 02 00 09 00 06 00 31-00 00 61 63 73 70 4D 53 .....l-acspMS

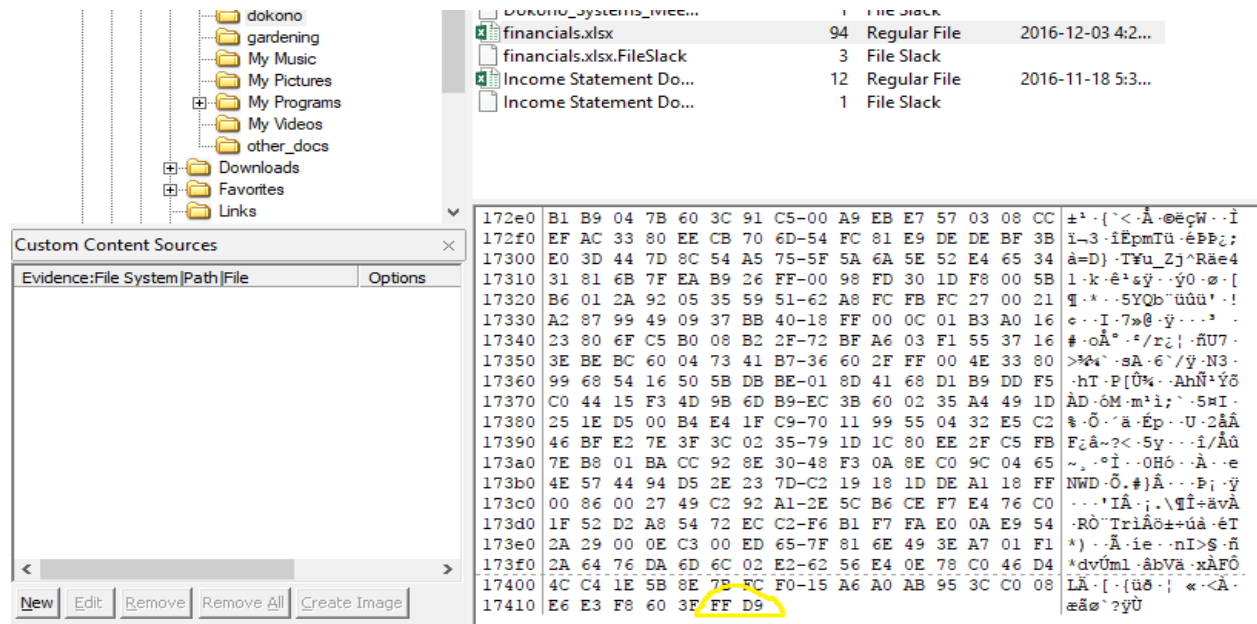
000050 46 54 00 00 00 00 49 45-43 20 73 52 47 42 00 00 FT...IEC sRGB

000060 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00-00 00 00 00 00 00 01 ...80

000070 00 00 00 00 D3 2D 48 50-20 20 00 00 00 00 00 00 ...0-HP

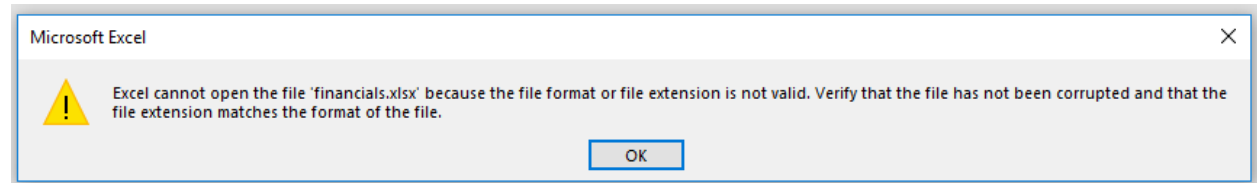
000080 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00-00 00 00 00 00 00 00

Similarly we noticed that the JPEG file ends with the constant byte values 0xFF D9 which always mark the end of a JPEG file.

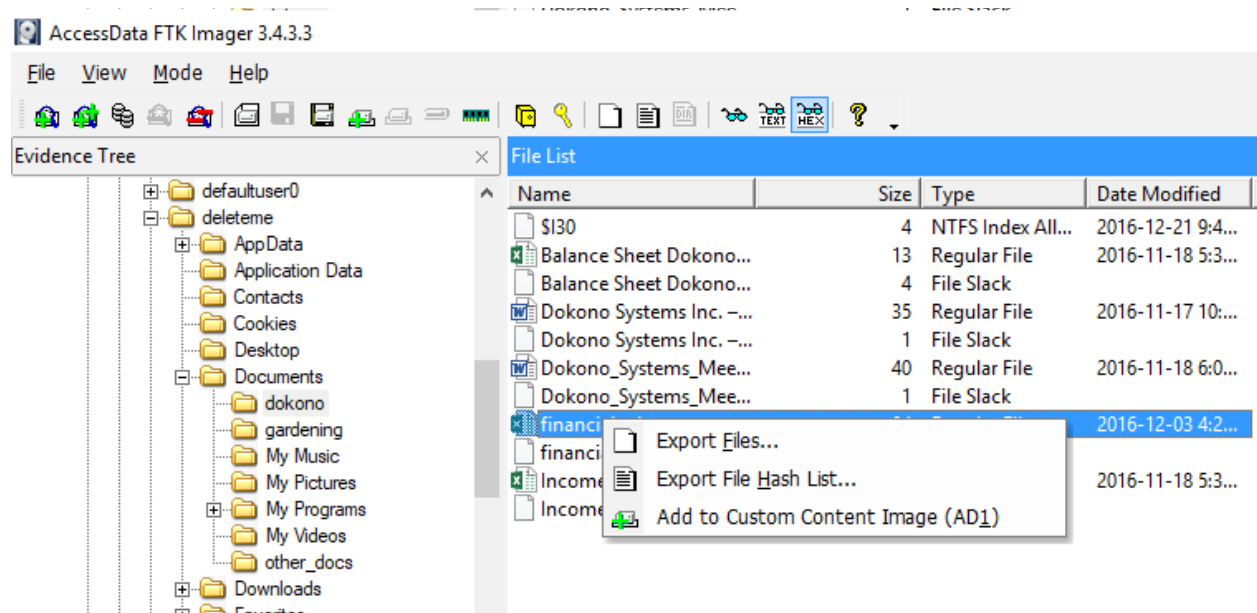


The constant values 0xFF D8 and 0xFF D9 are called magic numbers. And these tell us that the file is truly a JPEG image not a EXCEL file.

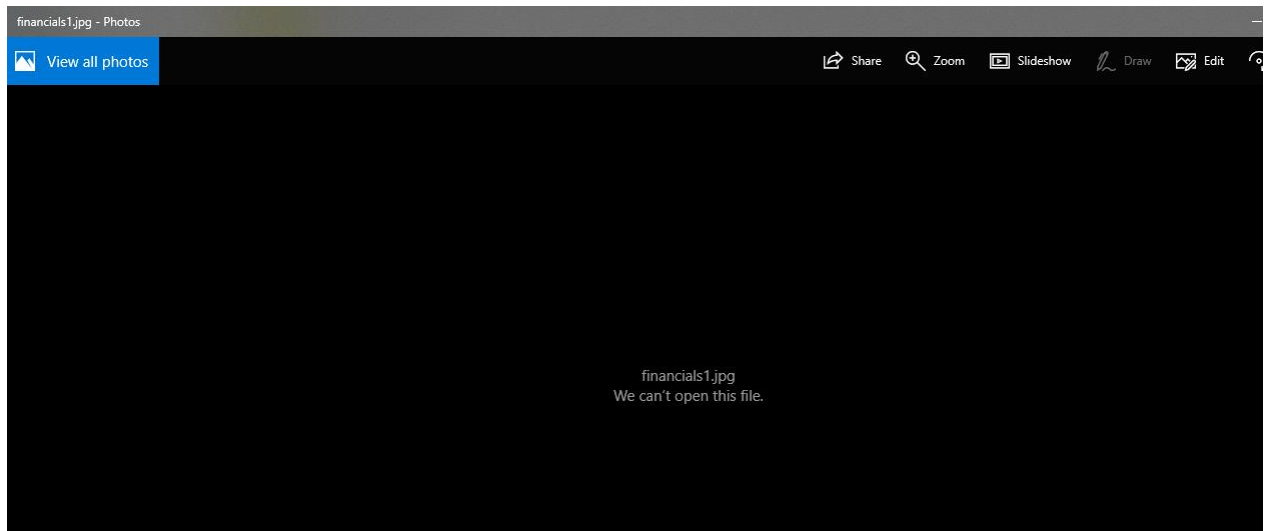
To further make sure that if it is excel file we tried opening it and got this msg.



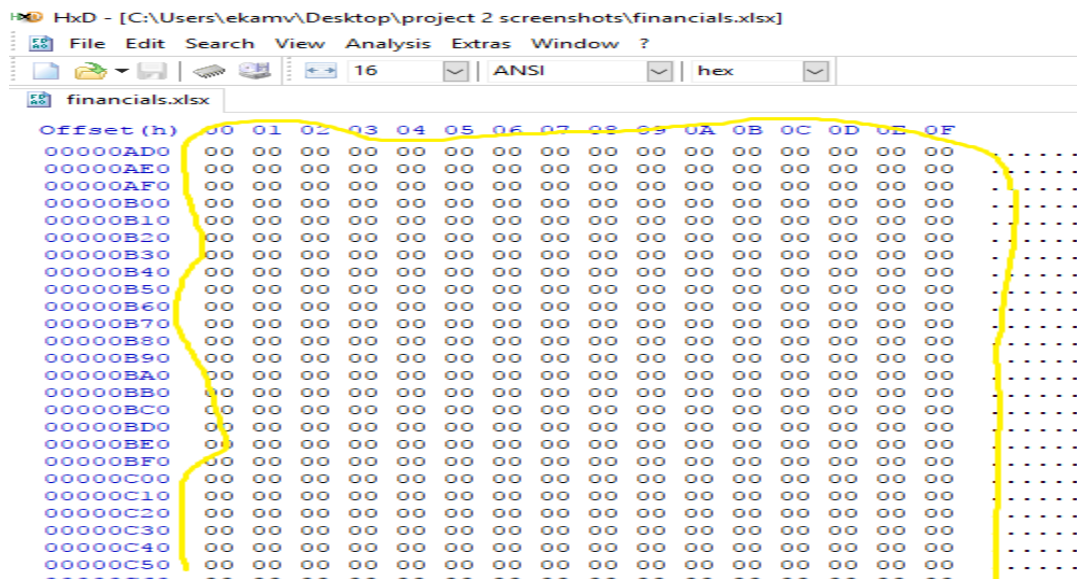
So we have exported the file on the desktop to do further analysis to reconstruct the image further.



Then we have used HxD Hexeditor which has the basic hex editing, capabilities for searching and replacing the deleting of byte patterns to open the **financials.xlsx**. After changing the file extension to .jpg instead of .xlsx it was not still opening.



Upon exploring the byte patterns we found that there are a large number of zeros which are embedded to corrupt the image intentionally Upon removing the zeros and saving it in .JPEG format, we found a compromising image of Mr. Lewis and Ms. Alicia. So, this is the first evidence that Mr. Lewis is the person who is trying to black mail Ms. Alicia Peabody. The compromised image is shown below.







### Evidence 3:

Signatures: When we browsed the Music->sample music-> Chopin'sSymphony\_N we found that there is a %PDF tag and the binary of the image is starting with 25 50 44 46 this means that the image is PDF file which is saved using different extension. Also we tried to play it but it gives us error.



AccessData FTK Imager 3.4.3.3

File View Mode Help

Evidence Tree

- PDFedit
- PhotoDateOrganizer
- StuffOrganizer
- My Videos
- other\_docs
- Downloads
- Favorites
- Links
- Local Settings
- Music
  - Sample Music
- My Documents
- NetHood
- OneDrive
- Pictures
  - Camera Roll
  - Sample Pictures

File List

Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
\$I30	4	NTFS Index All...	2016-12-21 7:3...
Beethoven's Symphon...	600	Regular File	2008-04-14 11:...
Beethoven's Symphon...	1	File Slack	
Chopin'sSymphony_N...	153	Regular File	2016-11-28 9:4...
Chopin'sSymphony_N...	4	File Slack	
New Stories (Highway ...	743	Regular File	2008-04-14 11:...
New Stories (Highway ...	2	File Slack	

Custom Content Sources

Evidence:File System	Path	File	Options

000000 25 50 44 46 2D 31 2E 36 0D 25 E2 E3 CF D3 0D 0A \$PDF-1.6 %âãÏÓ  
000010 00 21 20 30 20 6F 62 6A 0D 3C 3C 2F 46 69 6C 74 31 0 obj <</Filt  
000020 65 72 2F 46 6C 61 74 65 44 65 63 6F 64 65 2F 46 er/FlateDecode/F  
000030 69 72 73 74 20 35 2F 4C 65 6E 67 74 68 20 35 39 irst 5/Length 59  
000040 2F 4E 20 31 2F 54 79 70 65 2F 4F 62 6A 53 74 6D /N 1/Type/ObjStm  
000050 3E 3E 73 74 72 65 61 6D 0D 0A 68 DE 32 34 57 30 >>stream ··hþ24W0  
000060 50 B0 B1 D1 0F 28 CA 4F 0E 4E 2D 89 D6 0F 70 71 P±N·(EO·N-·Ö·pq  
000070 D3 F7 CC 4D 4C 4F 75 8E D5 8F F0 4F CA 4A 4D 2E Ö·IMLOu·Ö·80EJM.  
000080 01 4A 7B E6 1A 28 18 03 55 06 D9 01 01 40 80 01 ·J{æ·(·U·Ü··@·  
000090 00 8E AB 0E CE 0D 0A 65 6E 64 73 74 72 65 61 6D ··«·Î··endstream  
0000A0 0D 65 6F 64 6F 62 6A 0D 33 32 20 30 20 6F 62 6A ·endobj 32 0 obj

Then we exported it to the desktop, then upon saving the file using .pdf we found same signatures which the blackmailer sent her as the proof of having love letter possession. As shown follows in the figures.

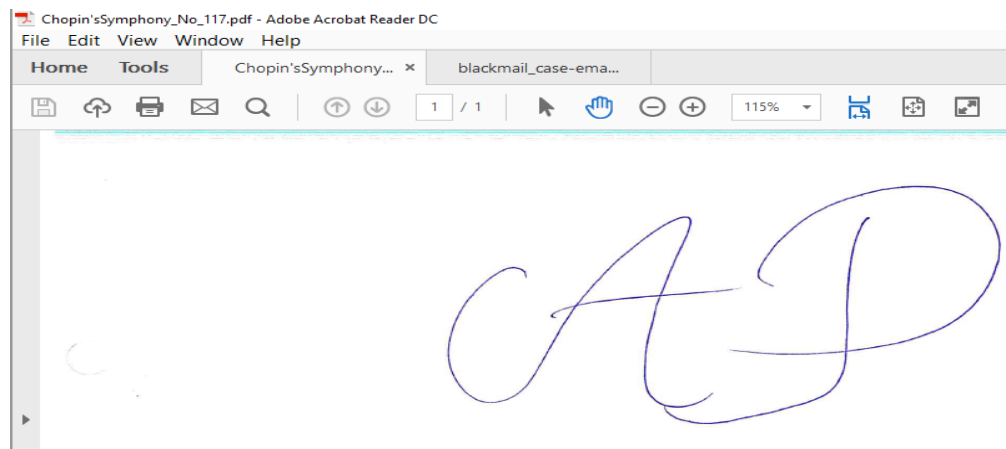
Attached as proof is your favorite signature apposed at the bottom of the letters. Unless you pay \$10,000, I'll send the pictures to your husband and at your workplace. Payment must be done in the next 10 days. Instructions for payment will follow. Stay tuned.

Jekyll Hyde.

Attachment (file Alicia\_signature.pdf)



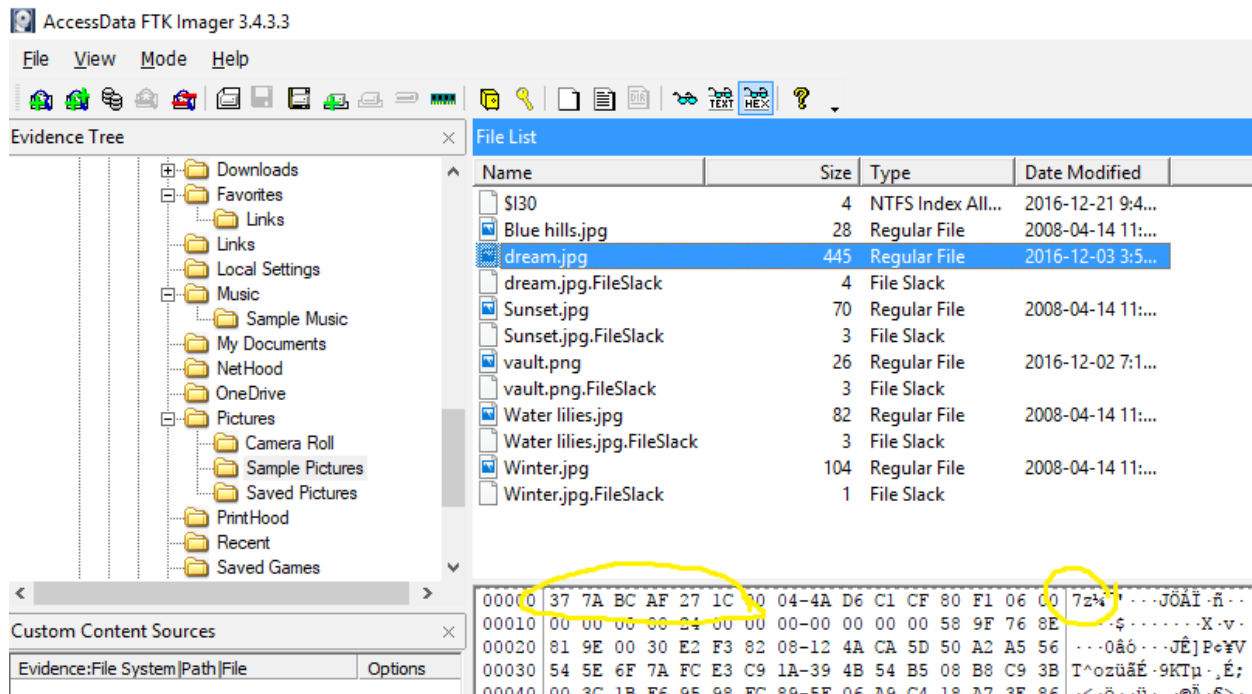
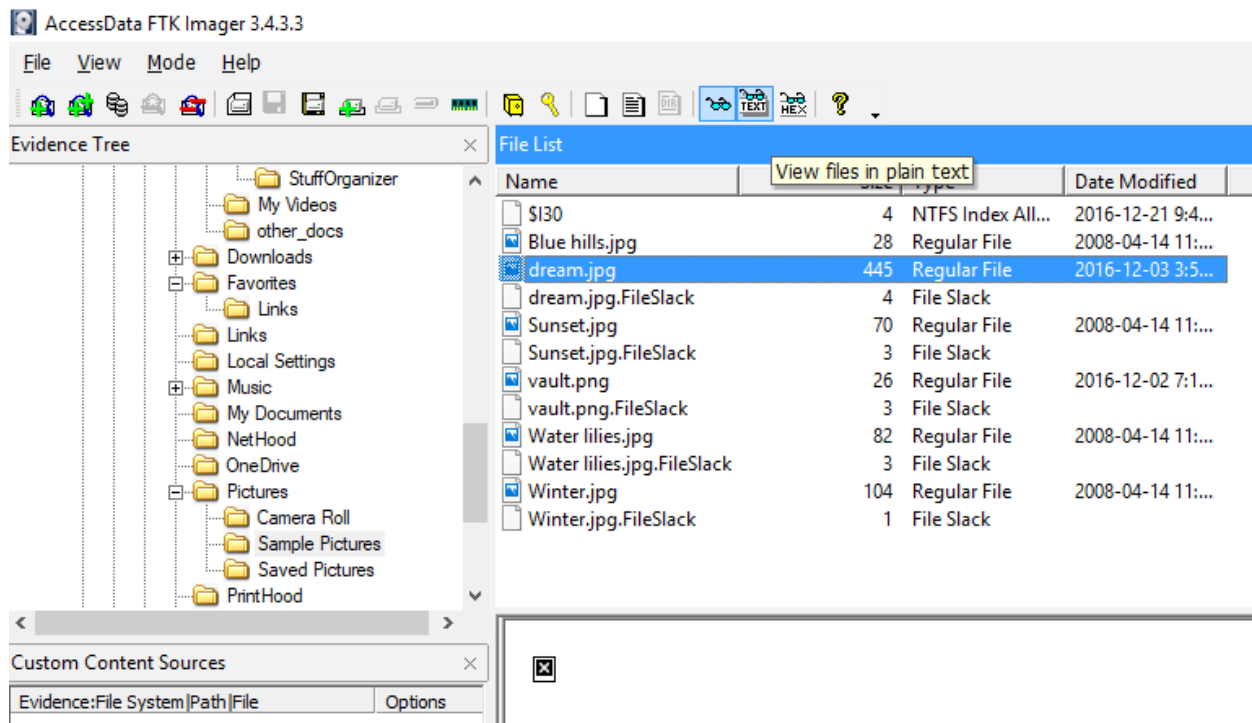
The figure shown below shows the same signatures when we converted the image into .pdf file. This confirms that Mr. John has made these signatures himself to use as integrity for the mails to send to Ms. Alicia.



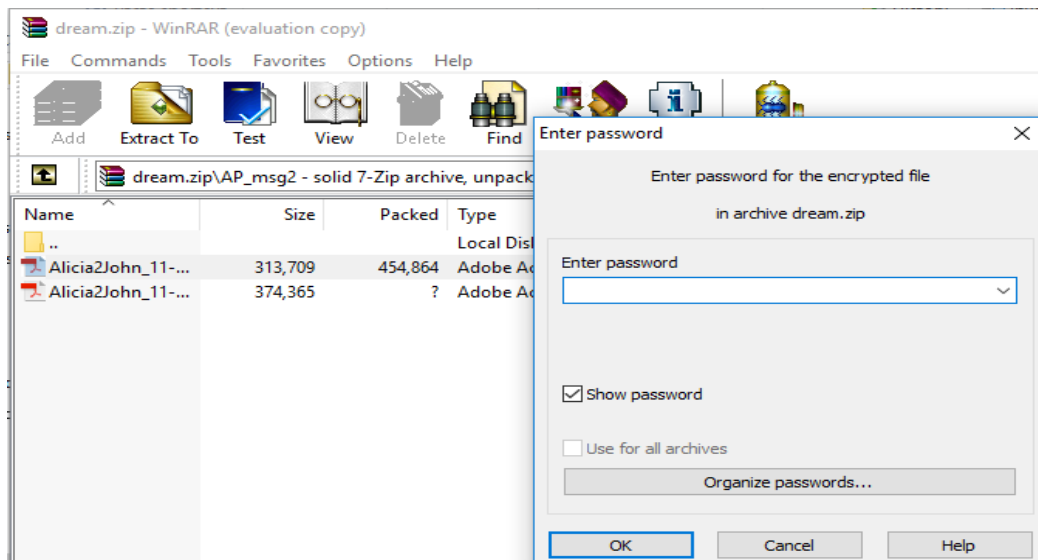
Evidence 4:

Upon browsing **Pictures-> Sample Pictures->dream.jpg** we found that in automatic (IE) mode there was a cross. All other files were opening fine for example Bluehills.jpg, Sunset.jpg. Then upon seeing the hex mode we again found that the extension had been changed to jpg but the image is having 7z signature and magic number 37 7A BC AF 27 1C as shown in the figure so this is confirmed that it is 7z file.

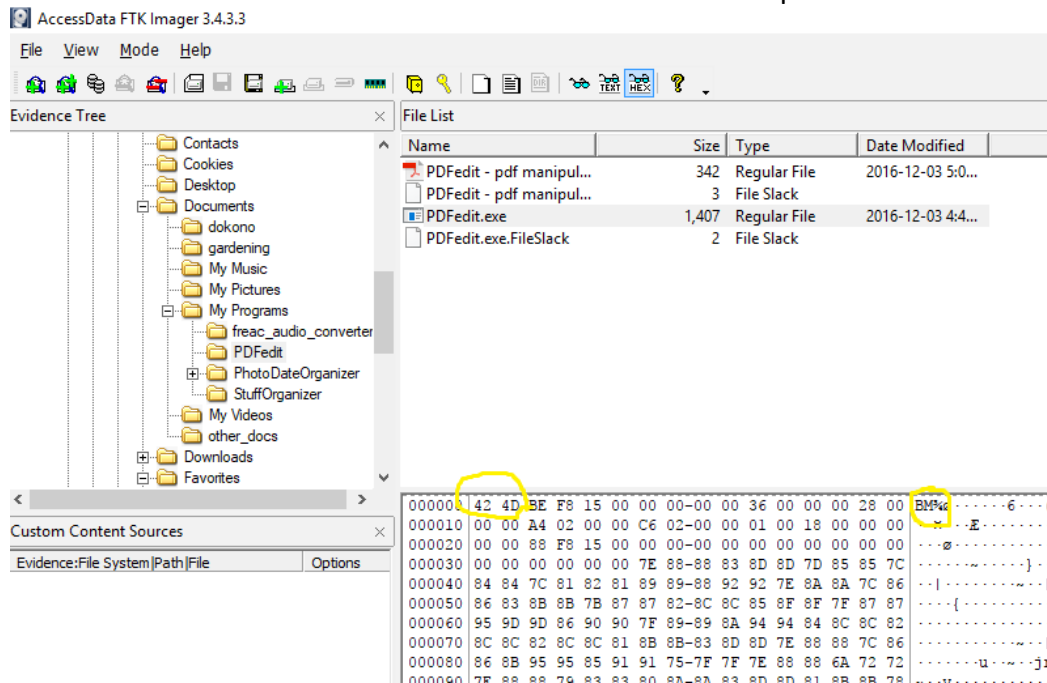




Then we converted the file into 7z. It was having two further files, while trying to open the files we found that there is a password on the files.



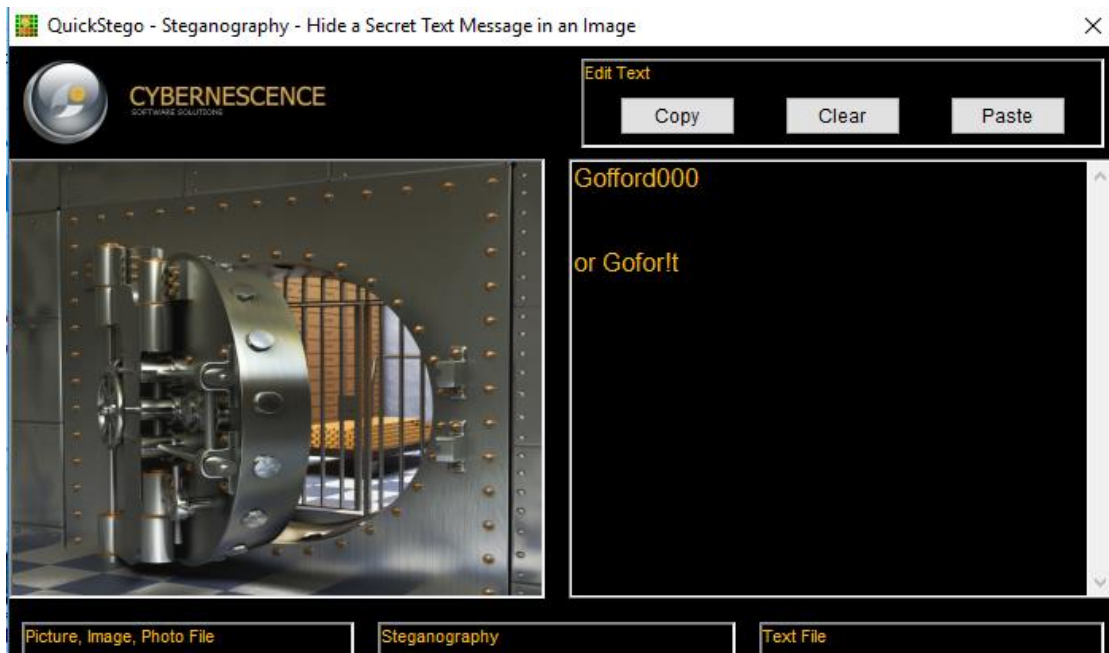
Then we tried to find the password of this file so we browsed My programs-> PDFedit->PDFedit.exe and we found that the file is BMP file with magic number 42 4D. so then we converted it into .BMP file. Then we become suspicious about the file.



As why would someone changed the extension of a bmp file to .exe so, then we opened the file

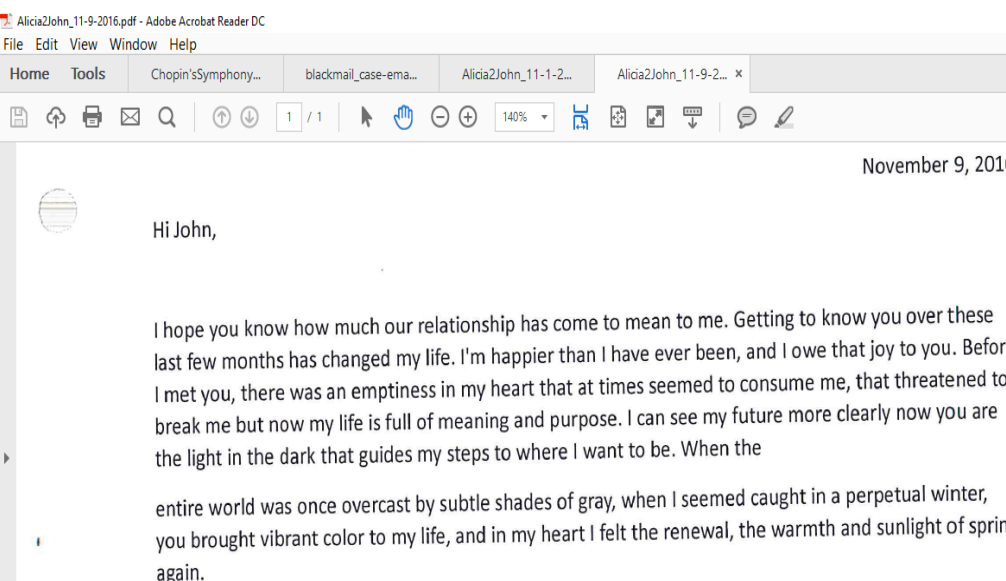
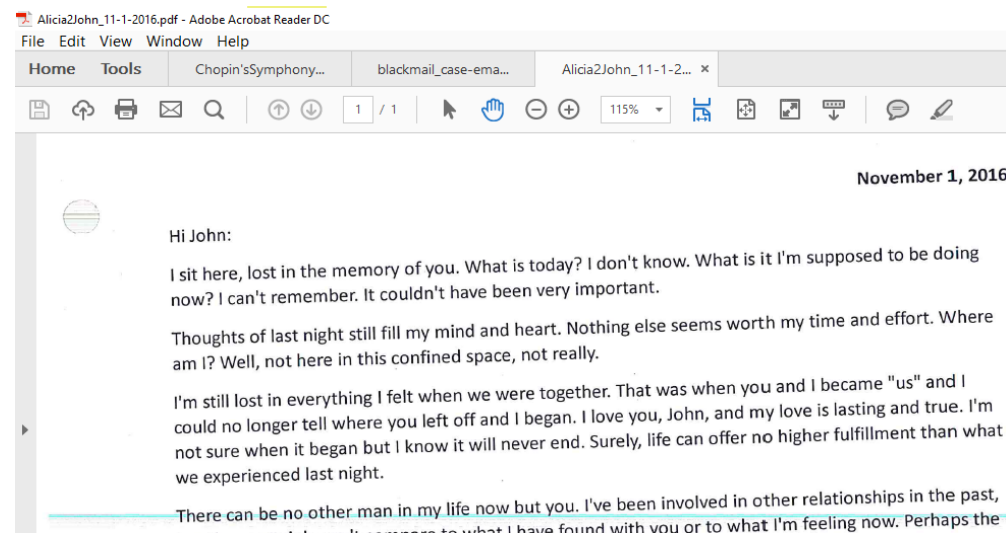
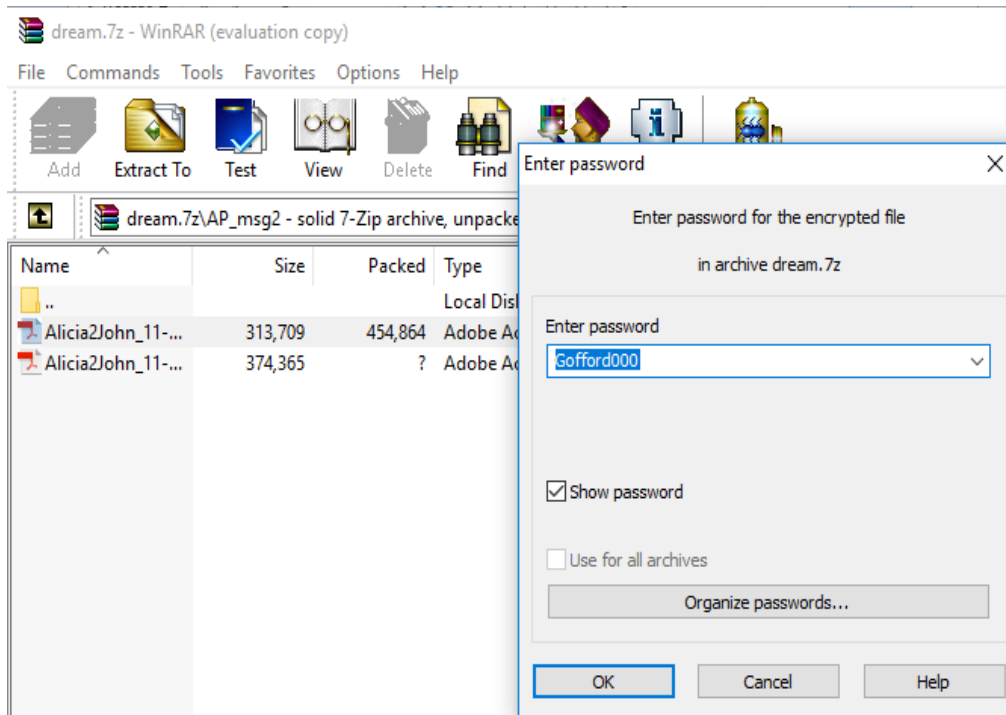


Image does not have anything but since to find the reason of changing the file extension, we tried using QuickStego and we found that there are again two passwords hidden in the image. So we tried the passwords.



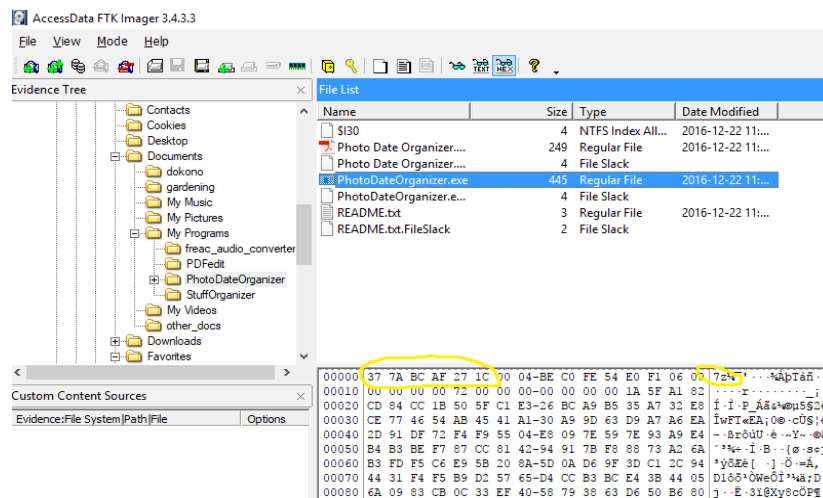
When we tried the password Gofford000 we are able to retrieve the letters the blackmailer was talking about in the email.



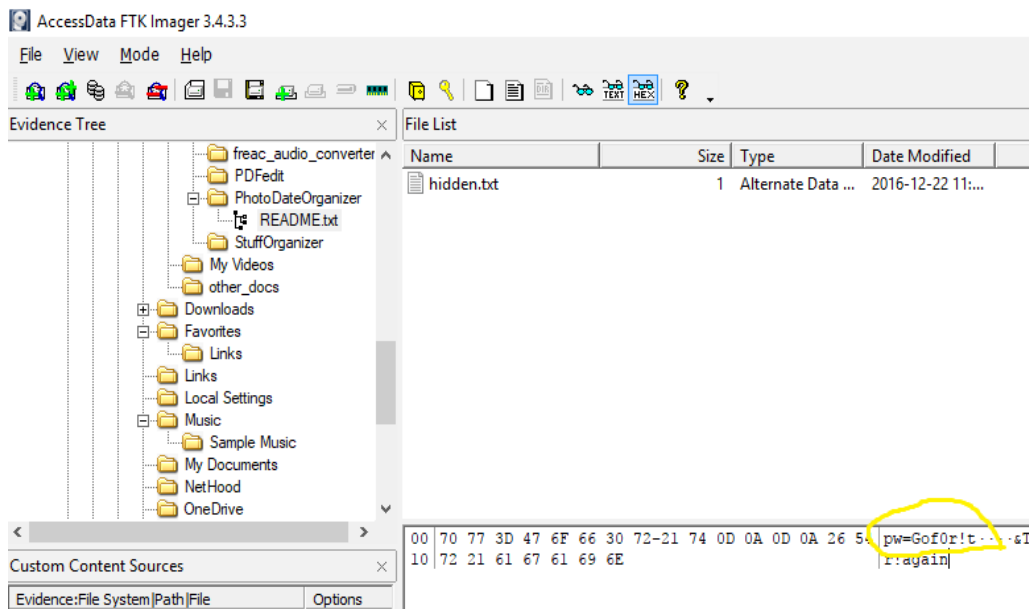


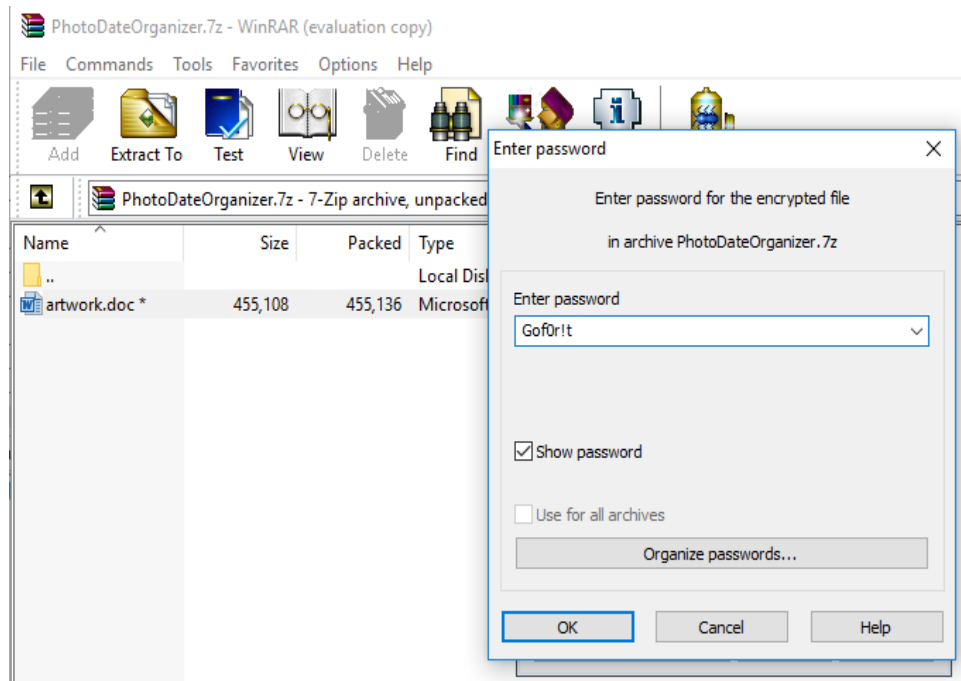
Evidence 5:

When we browsed the folder My Programs->PhotoDateOrganizer then again we found that there is a file named PhotoDateOrganizer.exe. Upon opening this file in hex mode we found that it is also a 7z file and have magic number 37 7A BC AF 27 1C. So we exported the file then when we tried opening it, again a password is there. Then we tried the second password we found in the PDFedit.bmp but it was not working. So we tried to find password in some other file.

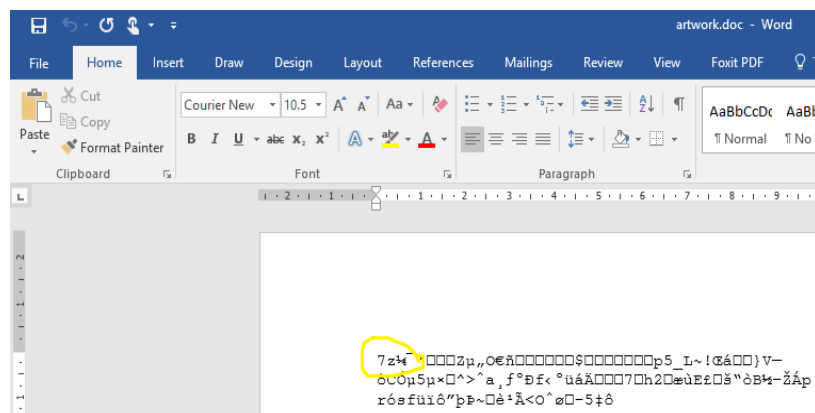


When we tried opening PhotoDateOrganizer.7z there was a password and we found its password in the same location PhotodateOrganizer->README.txt->hidden.txt. When we tried the password it was working.





Upon opening the file, it was again zip file, and we came to know it when we tried opening artwork.doc. again it was starting from 7z as shown follows. Then we converted it again into artwork.7z



Then we found one more picture vault.png and upon browsing the end of the hex file there was written pw=Cliford235 then we tried this password to open PhotoDateOrganizer.7z and it was opened.







Alicia2John\_11-1-2016.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC

File Edit View Window Help

Home Tools Alicia2John\_11-1-2016-2... x

1 / 1 115%

November 1, 2016

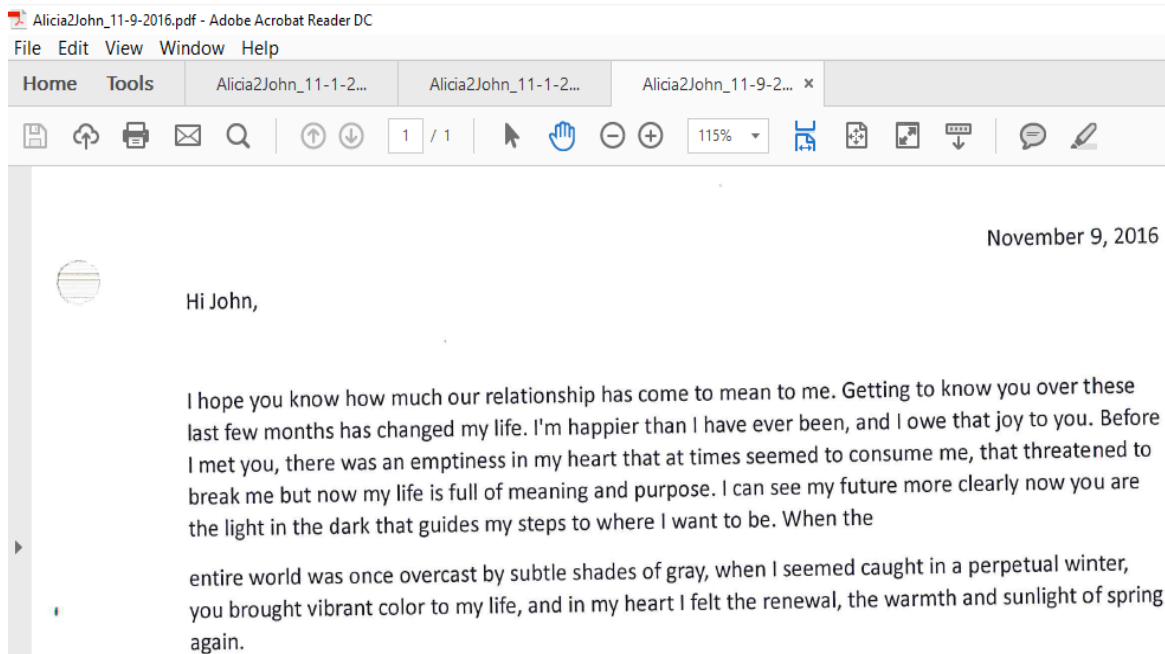
Hi John:

I sit here, lost in the memory of you. What is today? I don't know. What is it I'm supposed to be doing now? I can't remember. It couldn't have been very important.

Thoughts of last night still fill my mind and heart. Nothing else seems worth my time and effort. Where am I? Well, not here in this confined space, not really.

I'm still lost in everything I felt when we were together. That was when you and I became "us" and I could no longer tell where you left off and I began. I love you, John, and my love is lasting and true. I'm not sure when it began but I know it will never end. Surely, life can offer no higher fulfillment than what





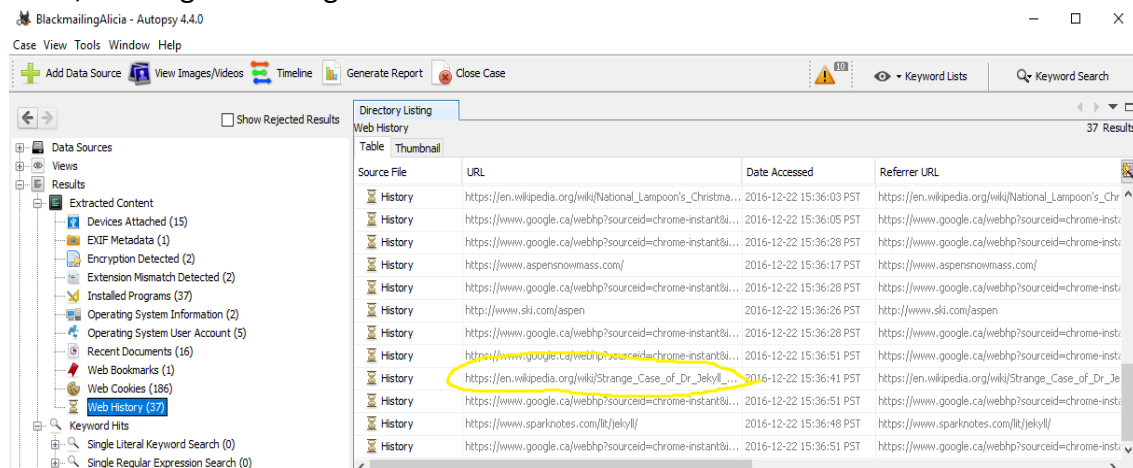
So we found that there are two locations where Mr. John. Has kept the letters which Ms. Alicia sent to Mr. John.

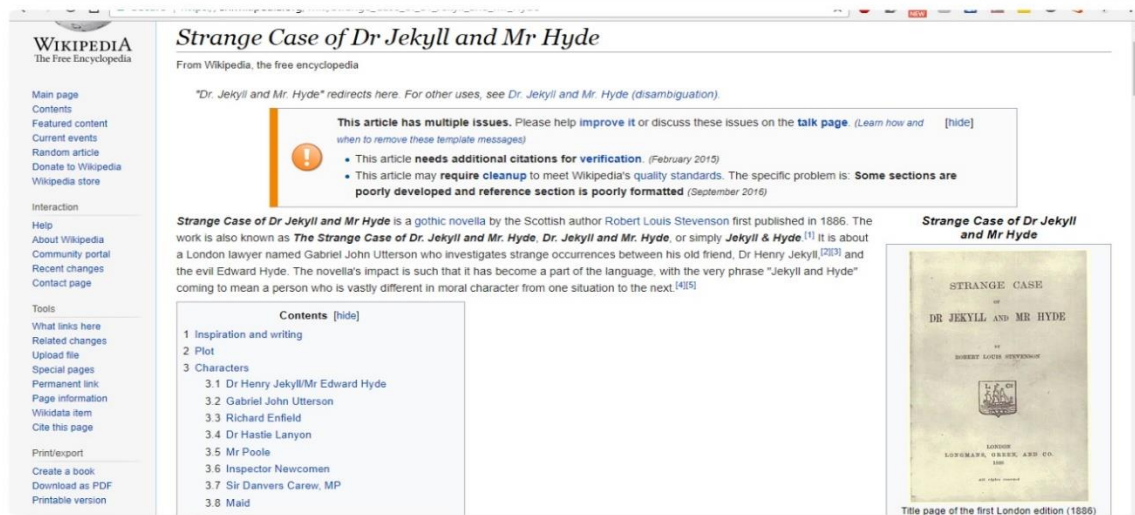
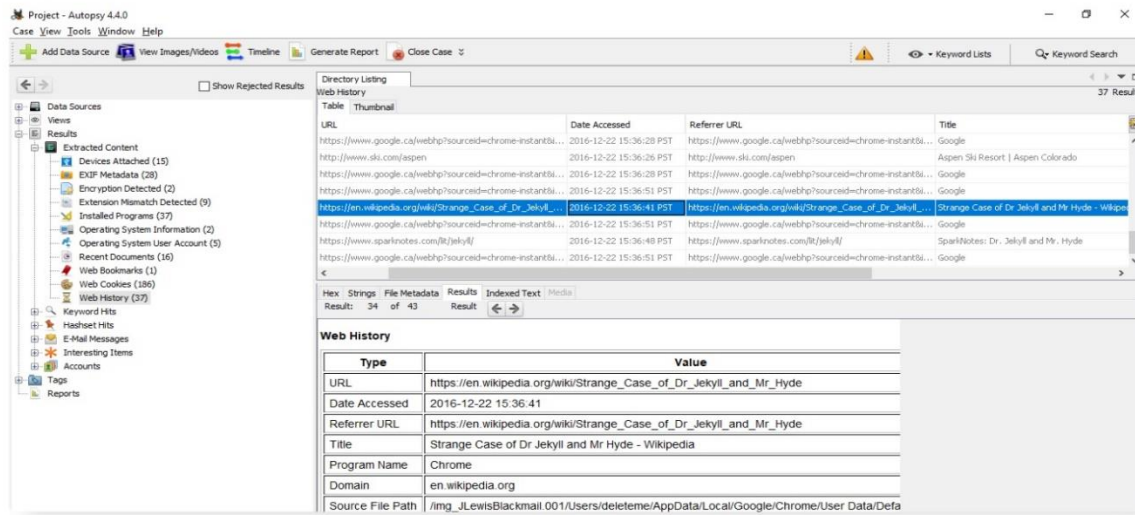
#### Evidence 6:

When we uploaded the investigation file in Autopsy, and we looked into cookies:

Results-> Web History

Then we found that Mr. John had visited a page from Wikipedia to read the strange case of Dr Jekyll. This gives a strong evidence that Mr. John is the original blackmailer who was blackmailing Ms. Alicia, and might be using his name.





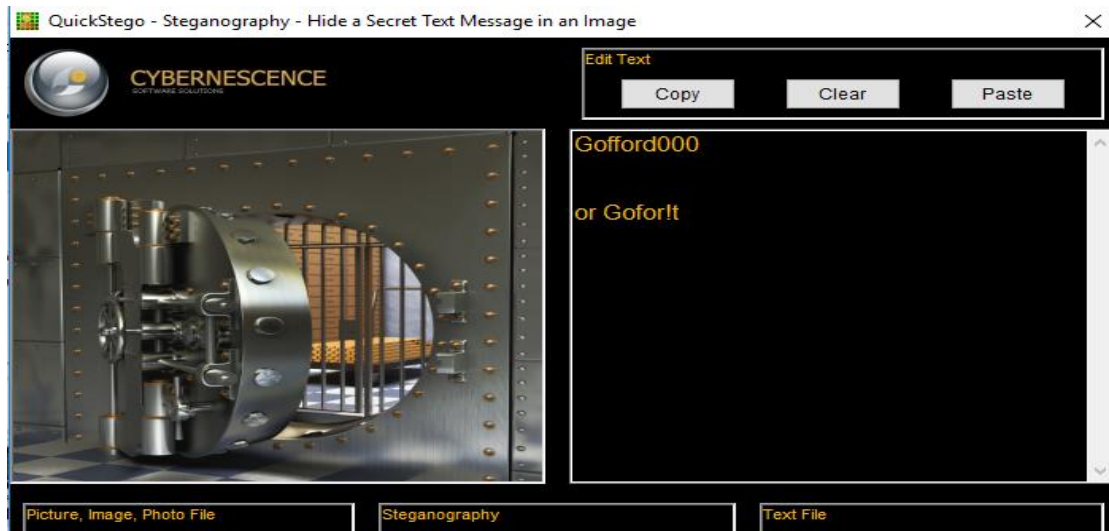
From all the 6 evidences we found, confirm that Mr. John was lying that he deleted all the data related to the relationship of Ms. Alicia and Mr. John.

- For each file, what processes were taken by the suspect to mask them from others? All masking processes used for relevant information must be identified, even redundant ones. [5%]

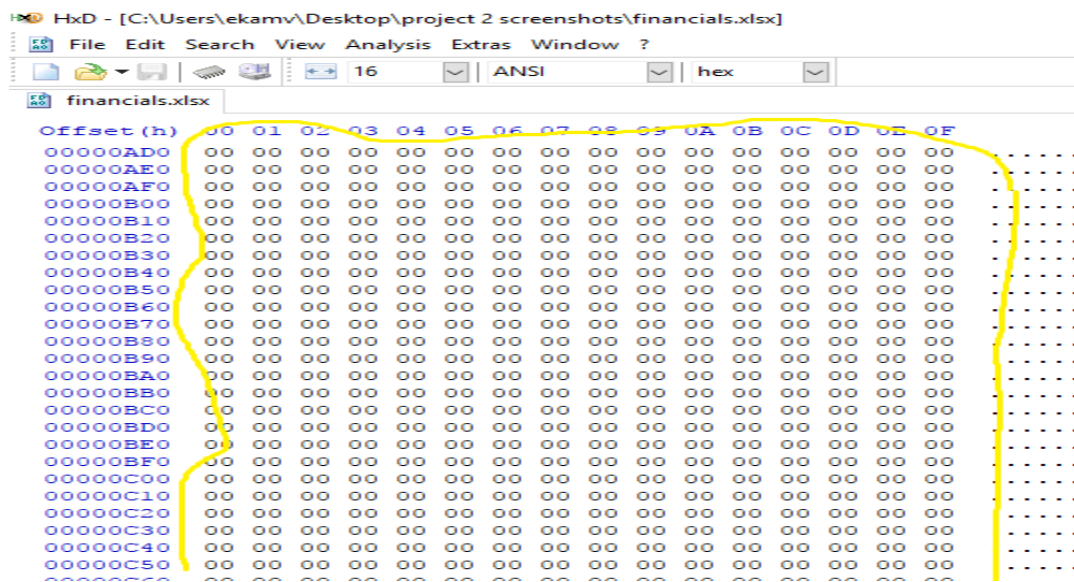
Answer:

Following are the masking processes used by the suspect:

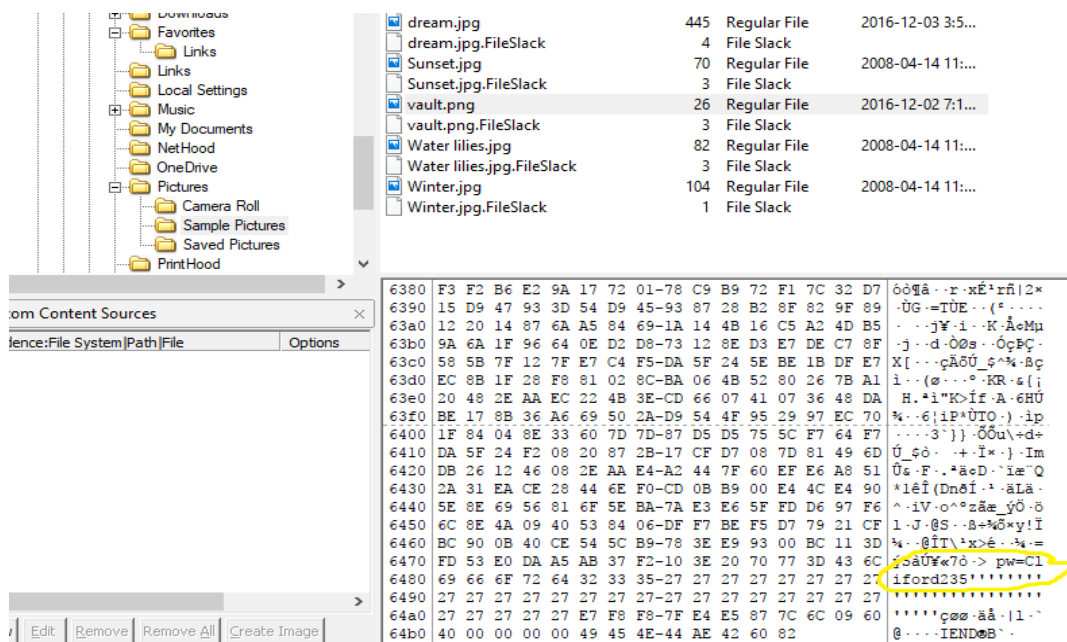
- Steganography: Suspect used this technique to hide the passwords which were required to open the 2 love letters. The tool used is Quickstego.



2. Hex editor: He has used this tool to corrupt the files, changed the extensions while saving the pictures, hide the passwords as shown follows.



In this screen shot it is shown that extra zeros are added to make sure that the image cannot be retrieved.



In this screen shot it is seen that password is hidden in the vault.png file which is an image and the password can be found either using hex editor or HEX code which can be viewed using FTK Imager.

### 3. Alternate data stream

This is used to hide the password using alternate data stream in hidden.txt which is further embedded into README.txt. one example is shown in the following screen shot as described in the tutorial

```
C:\Users\devine\Documents\courses\elec570\tools\Streams>streams C:\Users\devine\Desktop\testdir\ourSecret.docx

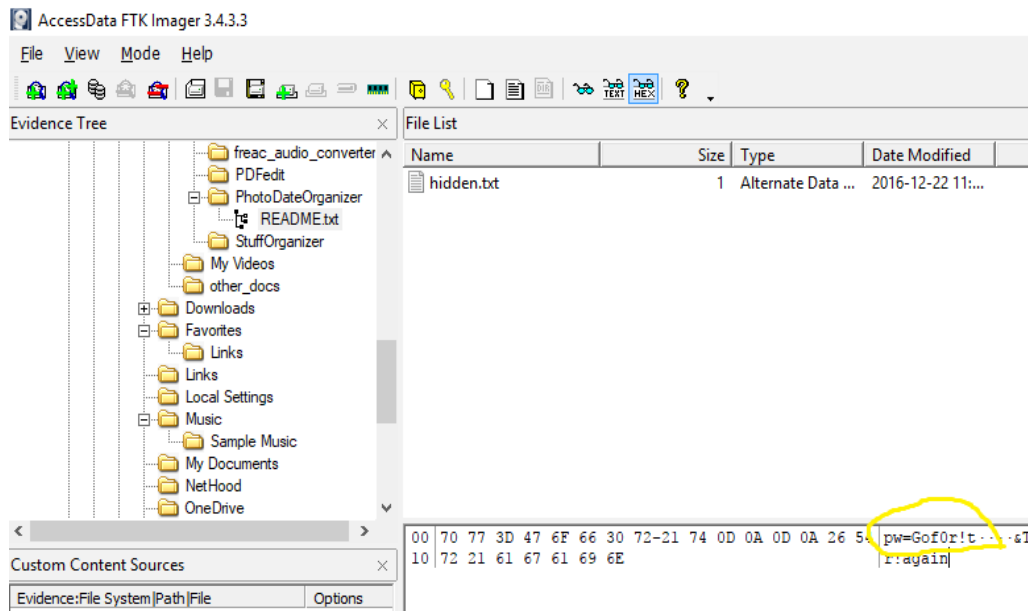
streams v1.60 - Reveal NTFS alternate streams.
Copyright (C) 2005-2016 Mark Russinovich
Sysinternals - www.sysinternals.com

C:\Users\devine\Desktop\testdir\ourSecret.docx:
:hidden:$DATA 12

C:\Users\devine\Documents\courses\elec570\tools\Streams>more < C:\Users\devine\Desktop\testdir\ourSecret.docx:hidden
```

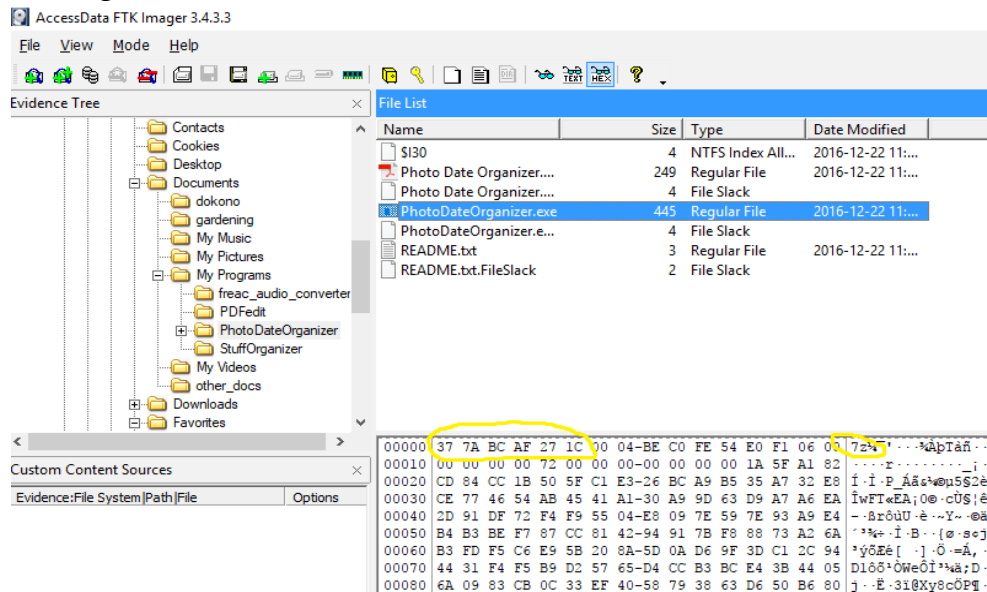


And then we found that the password is hidden in this hidden file.



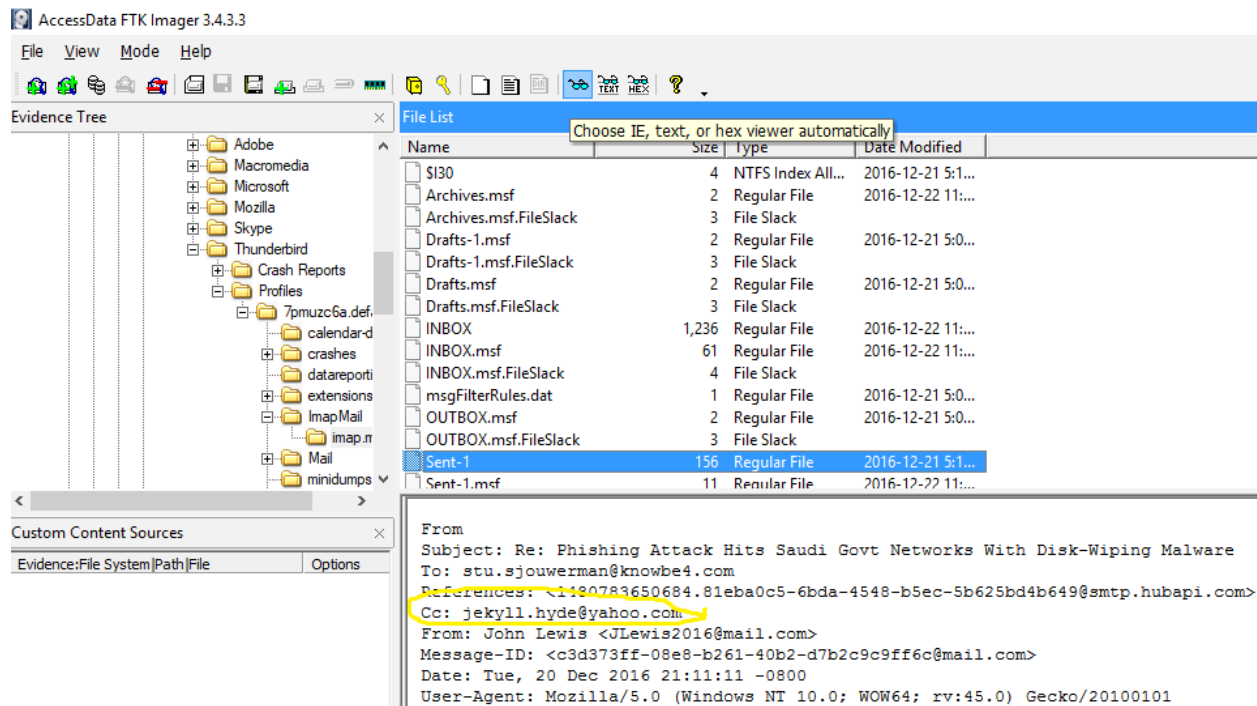
#### 4. FTK imager

We have used this tool to analyze the whole suspect machine. This tool helps to view the files in three modes named automatic, text and HEX from where we can see the images and there content and investigate the suspicious files. For example, the screen shot below shows that the file PhotoDateOrganizer is saved as .exe but it is a .7z folder and there are various other examples.



#### 4. Investigate and discuss whether or not the email evidence helps in making the case against the suspect. [5%]

The first evidence we found about the emails was in the sent folder of Mr. John where he did CC to Mr. Jekyll. So, it can be predicted that Mr. John is the person who is sending the email and is using name of someone else. But at the same time this cannot be ruled out that he can be his friend to whom he is using to send Ms. Alicia blackmailing email.



According to our investigation we can say that Mr. John has definitely lied that he has deleted all the personal content of both of them, But only email evidence shows that they both know each other but definitely not that he has send that blackmailing email to Ms. Alicia.



The second evidence we found against him was Ms. Alicia's signature, but question was not asked about those signatures by the investigators.

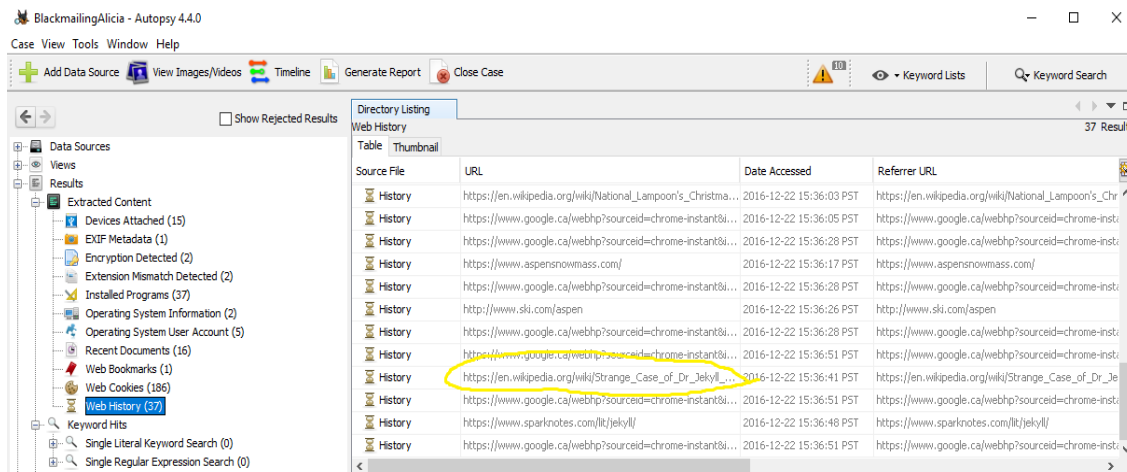
But there is no strong evidence available, which can definitely establish relation between Mr. John and Mr. Jekyll which can prove it that these both names are of the same person.

But as he denied that he does not have any evidence about their relation, and we found a lot of evidences which are encrypted in so many ways so that no one see them. Or he is making sure that even police will not be able to find it that he is in possession of anything which blackmailer was talking about makes the evidences stronger against him.

5. Discuss and justify whether or not the overall evidence is enough to conclude blackmailing by the suspect. [4%]

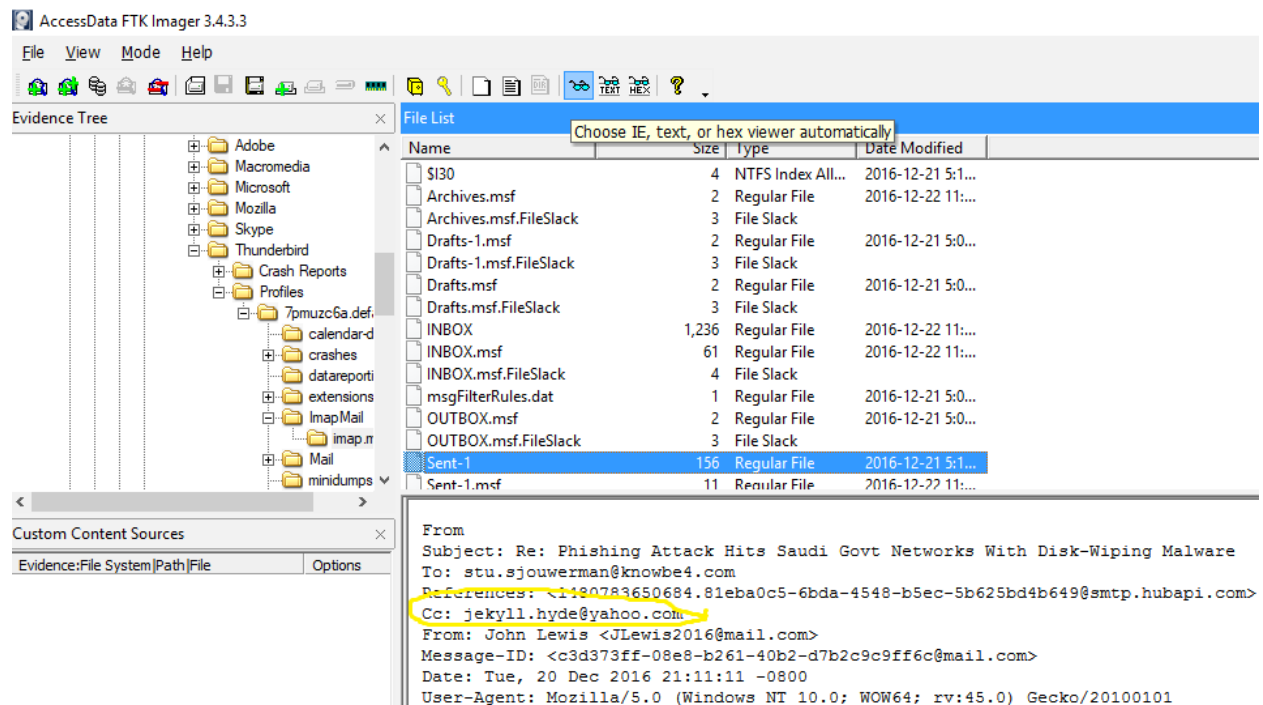
Answer: Overall evidence is enough for Mr. John to be a suspect because he browsed the strange case of Dr. Jekyll from where Ms. Alicia got the blackmailing email, may be used this search to find a name which can act as blackmailer.



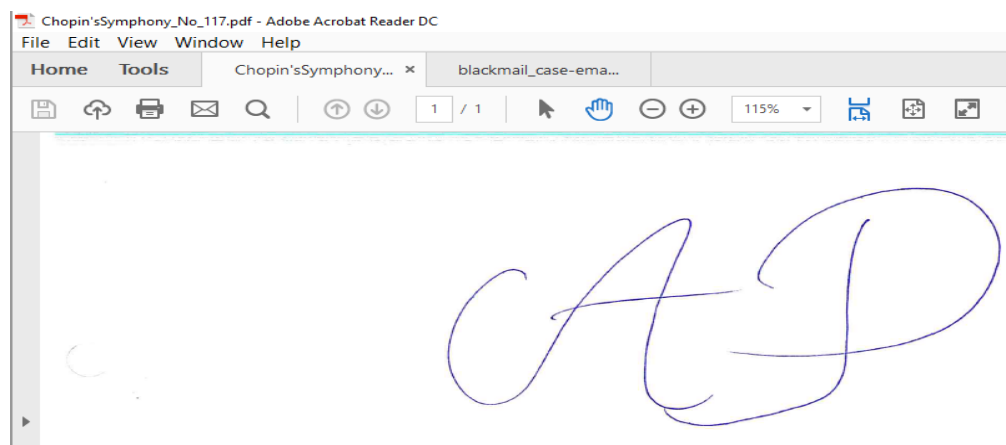


Then we found that Mr. John send an email to the someone with CC as [jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com](mailto:jekyll.hyde@yahoo.com).

This person can be his friend whom he has asked to blackmail Ms. Alicia. And in the investigation he denied that he does not know anything about this email Is and the person.



We found signatures of Ms. Alicia which are used in the blackmailing email.





He used Steganography to hide the passwords to open the files. He kept love letters at two different locations and have used different passwords to open these files. He tried to hide everything from the investigators to prove himself as innocent. But if would have deleted the files then also with the help of FTK imager investigators could have come to know that he has deleted the files at the time of break up. But he was in procession of everything the black mailer was talking about and that too hidden. So, he is definitely involved in blackmailing Ms. Alicia

