OSINT CHALLENGE 2

Challenge Write-Up: *Whispers on the Express*

Challenge Description Recap

> Every great journey leaves traces beyond the photograph.
>
> Some are etched in stories, others hidden in conversations left behind.
>
> This moment was shared publicly by **wanderingwizard** where people share opinions,
>
> and a quiet signal was added where people usually speak — not where images live.
>
> Listen closely to what was said, not just what was shown.
>
> The message speaks in pulses, and what you hear is only the beginning.
>
> Decode the layers to uncover the truth.
>
> **Flag format:** `EXC{...}`

Understanding the Clues (Plain English)

Let's break this down slowly:

- **"shared publicly by wanderingwizard"**

  → Refers to a public post by a user named `wanderingwizard`

- **"where people share opinions"**

  → This points to **Twitter** (now X)

- **"not where images live"**

  → The clue is *not* in the image itself

  → It is in the **comments / replies**

- **"speaks in pulses"**

→ Strong hint for **Morse code**

- **“what you hear is only the beginning”**

  → Implies **multiple layers of decoding**

So we already know:

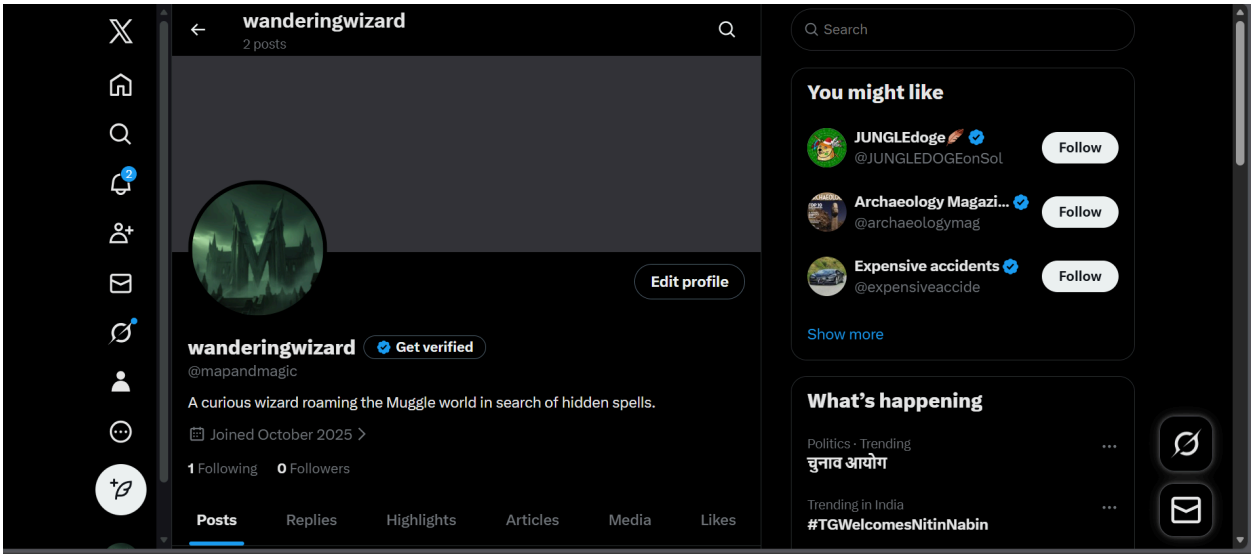
> The flag is hidden in the **comments of a Twitter post**, and it is **encrypted in multiple layers**.

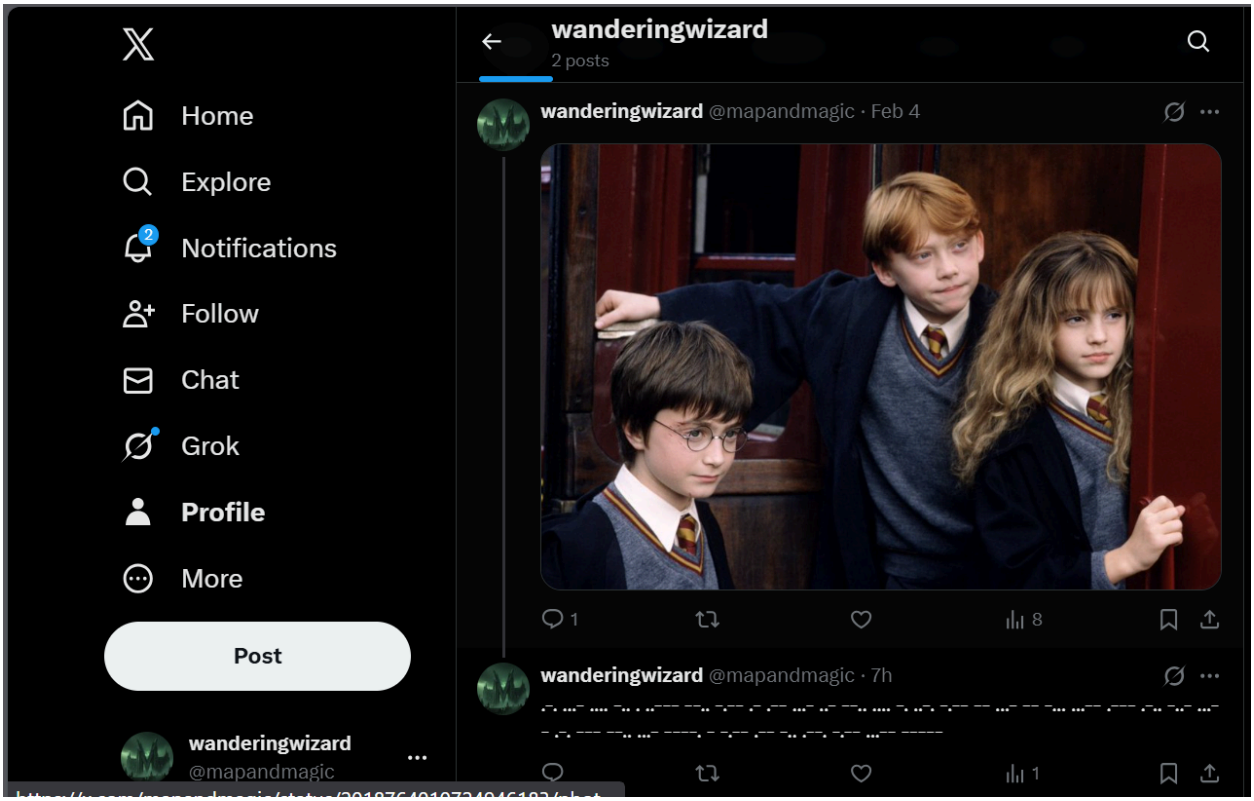
Step 1: Find the Relevant Twitter Post

1. Go to Twitter (X)
2. Search for the user: `wanderingwizard`
3. Look through their public posts related to the challenge theme
4. Open the post and **carefully read the comments/replies**

You will find a comment that looks unusual — consisting of dots, dashes, or strange symbols.

This is **not normal text**, which confirms it is encrypted.





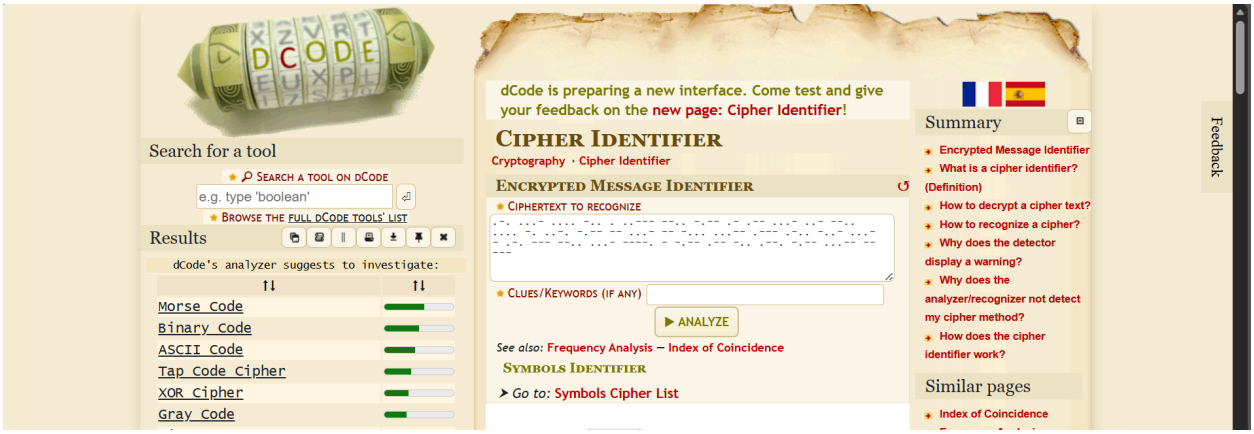
Step 2: Identify the Encryption Layers

From the challenge and confirmation:

1. **First layer:** Base64
2. **Second layer:** Morse Code

Important:

The order matters. You must decode **in the correct sequence**.



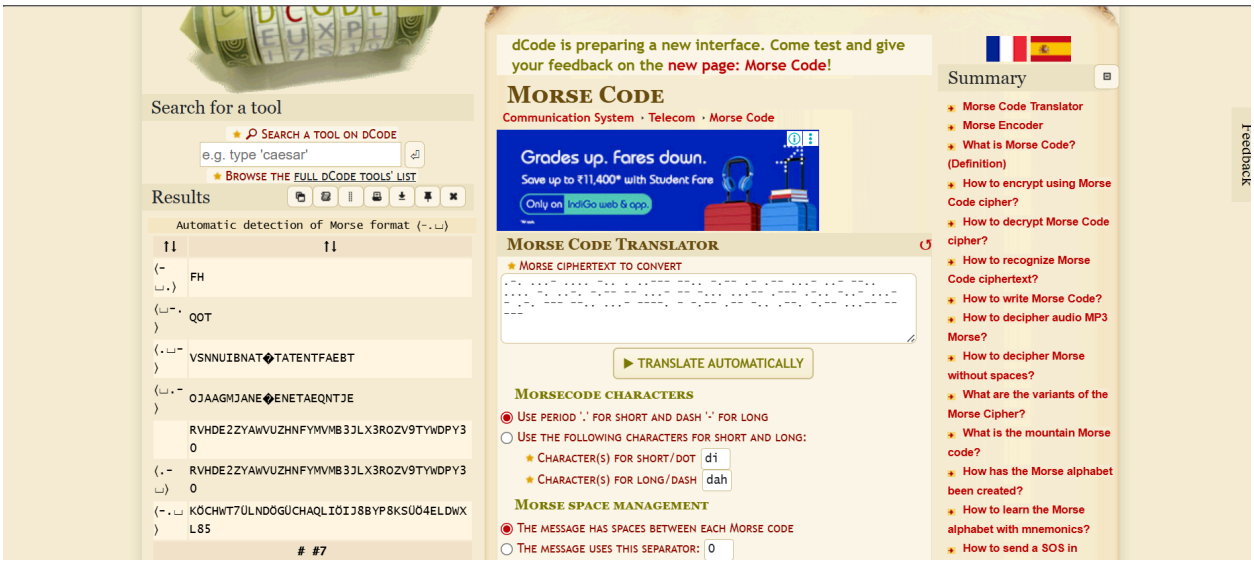
Step 3: Decode the Morse Code

Take the encrypted comment and:

1. Copy the dots (`.`) and dashes ()
2. Use any Morse decoder (online or offline)
3. Decode the Morse code into readable text

After decoding Morse, the output will **still look scrambled**.

That's expected — because Morse is **not the final layer**.

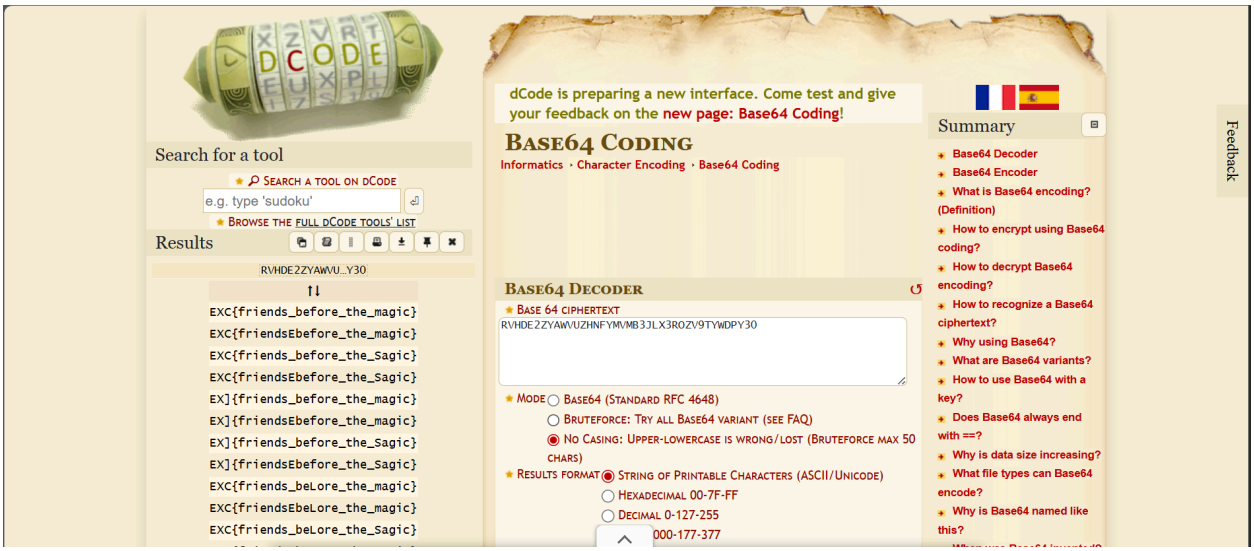


Step 4: Decode Base92

Now take the output from the Morse decoding step and:

1. Identify it as **Base64-encoded text**
2. Use a Base64 decoder
3. Decode the text

After decoding Base64, you finally get a **clean, readable sentence**.



Step 5: Extract the Flag

The fully decoded text reveals the flag content:

```
EXC{friends_before_the_magic}
```

This matches the correct solution

Final Answer

Flag:

```
EXC{friends_before_the_magic}
```

Key Takeaways for Beginners

- OSINT clues often hide **outside the obvious content**
- Always check:
  - comments
  - replies

    - captions
- “Pulses”, “signals”, and “listening” often hint at **Morse**
- Multi-layer encryption is common — **don’t stop after one decode**
- Order of decoding **matters**
