

OSINT CHALLENGE 3

Challenge Write-Up: *Slytherin Restricted Vault*

Challenge Description Recap

Only a chosen few are allowed inside the most guarded vault of the House of the Serpent.

The door does not open for brute force or guesswork — it listens only to those who pay attention.

Clues have been left behind in places people rarely read and icons people rarely click.

Some secrets are whispered in another language.

Others hide behind titles and traditions.

Decode what you find.

Ignore what you don't need.

Only the names matter.

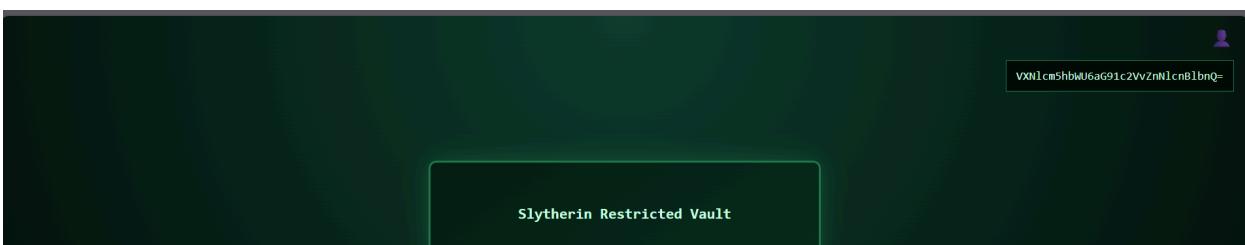
Flag format: EXC{...}



Step 1: Decode the Base64 Clues

Username Hint (Header Icon)

The page has a **profile icon** (👤). Clicking it reveals a hidden hint.



Decoded Base64:

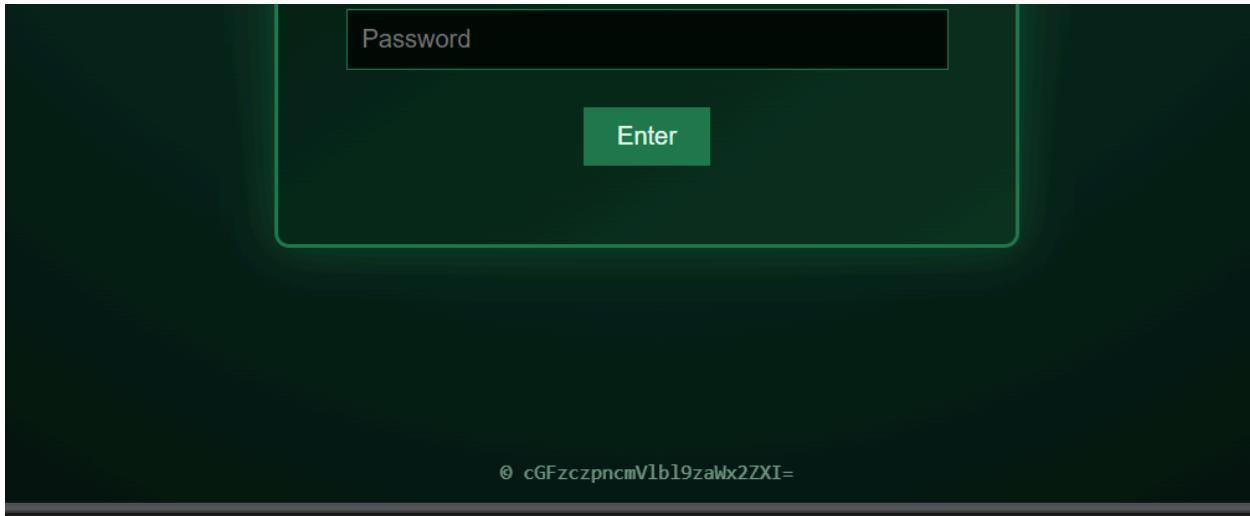
```
VXNlcjcm5hbWU6aG91c2VvZnNlcnB1bnQ=
```

Decodes to:

```
Username: houseofserpent
```

This gives us the **correct username**.

Password Hint (Footer)



At the bottom of the page (footer), another Base64 string appears:

cGFzczcPncmVlbl9zaWx2ZXI=

Decodes to:

pass: green_silver

This gives us the **password**.

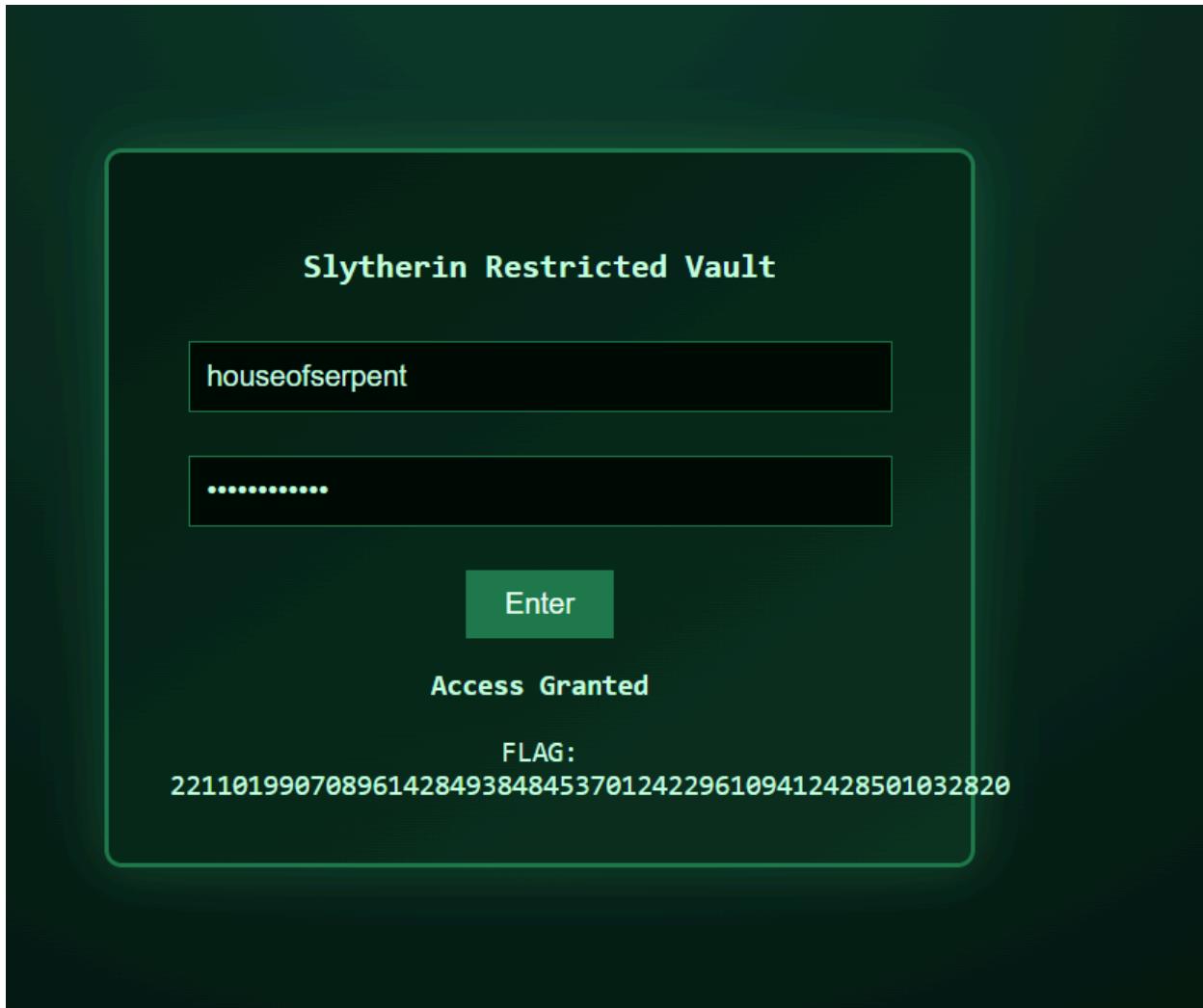
Step 2: Log In with the Correct Credentials

Now enter:

- **Username:** houseofserpent
- **Password:** green_silver

Click **Enter**.

Access is granted, and the page reveals a long numeric value.



Step 3: Interpreting the Result

Although a number is displayed after login, the challenge description clearly states:

| “Only the names matter.”

This tells us:

- The real flag is **not the number**
- The number is a homophonic cipher
- The meaningful solution is the **successful vault unlock**

The screenshot shows the dCode Homophonic Cipher tool interface. At the top, there's a search bar with placeholder text "e.g. type 'random'" and a "SEARCH A TOOL ON dCODE" button. Below the search bar is a "Results" section containing the encrypted flag: "EXCSLYTHERINSECRETSUNLOCKED". To the right, the "HOMOPHONIC CIPHER" page is displayed, featuring a navigation menu with links like "Homophonic Decoder", "Homophonic Encoder", etc. Below the menu is a "HOMOPHONIC DECODER" section with a "DECRYPT" button and a table titled "CORRESPONDENCE". The table lists letter mappings:

	Letter	Replacement(s)
1	A	21,27,31,40
2	B	15
3	C	01,33
4	D	20,34
5	E	22,28,32,36,37
6	F	05
7	G	17
8	H	14
0	I	02,20,28,41

On the right side of the page, there's a "Summary" sidebar with links to related topics like "Homophonic Decoder", "Homophonic Encoder", etc., and a "Feedback" button.

From the challenge validation, the correct flag is:

EXC{SLYTHERINSECRETSUNLOCKED}

Final Answer

Flag:

EXC{SLYTHERINSECRETSUNLOCKED}

Key Takeaways for Beginners

- Always **inspect the page source** in web challenges
- Click **icons and UI elements** — they may hide clues
- Base64 is commonly used for **simple obfuscation**
- Read the **challenge description carefully** — it tells you what to ignore
- Don't brute-force when the challenge says not to