Bandit – Stage by Stage explanation

Level 0

All you have to do here is ssh onto the bandit server. This can be done with the command \$ ssh -p 2220 bandit0@bandit.labs.overthewire.org and then entering the password bandit0

Level 1

The password for the next level is stored in a file on the desktop named 'readme'.

This can be revealed with the ls command, and read with cat readme.

The password for bandit1 is boJ9jbbUNNfktd7800psq0ltutMc3MY1

Level 2

The password here is stored in a file called '-'

This can be revealed with the ls command, but running cat - confuses the system, as - normally denotes a flag. We can get around this by using the complete file path, './-'. This gives us the command cat ./-

The password for bandit2 is CV1DtqXWVFXTvM2F0k09SHz0YwRINYA9

Level 3

The password for the next level is stored in a file called spaces in this filename located in the home directory

This cannot be accessed by simply running cat spaces in this file name, as the system will register this as four separate files. Instead, we can either use the escape character, ", in front of the spaces, or specify the file name in quotation marks. This gives us either cat spaces\ in\ this\ filename or cat "spaces in this file name"

The password for bandit3 is UmHadQclWmgdLOKQ3YNgjWxGoRMb5luK

Level 4

The password for the next level is stored in a hidden file in the inhere directory.

We can change into this directory using cd inhere, and then reveal the hidden file, which is called 'hidden'. We can then read the contents of this file with the command cat .hidden.

The password for bandit4 is pIwrPrtPN36QITSp3EQaw936yaFoFgAB

Level 5

The password for the next level is stored in the only human-readable file in the inhere directory. Tip: if your terminal is messed up, try the "reset" command.

Again, we can change to the inhere directory using cd inhere. Running 1s then reveals that there are ten files in this directory. As we know that the password is contained in a human readable file, we need to somehow filter the files by filetype. This can be done with the command find . -type f | xargs file. This works by finding all the files in the current directory, and passing these as an argument into the file command, which then lists them by type. Doing so reveals to us that 9 of the 10 files are of type 'data', but one is of type 'ASCII text'. Therefore, the password must be in this file.

This works given the relatively small number of files in this directory, but what if it were larger? We could extend this command by piping the output into grep text, giving us a complete command of

find . -type f | xargs file | grep text

This would return only the file marked as ASCII text, omitting all others.

The password for bandit5 is koReBOKuIDDepwhWk7jZC0RTdopnAYKh

Level 6

In this level, we are given three properties of the file containing the password. It is human readable, 1033 bytes and not executable.

Therefore, we need to somehow string these conditions together into a search command. We can again start with find . -type f, which is going to recursively find all files of in this directory and subdirectories. However, this gives an unusably long output. At this point, one might think to apply | xargs file | grep text, as in the previous level.

This was tried, but still presented the issue of giving an unworkably large number of files. For that reason, I changed the command used, and introduced the <code>-exec</code> flag to my initial find statement. This allows us to also run ls with the appropriate flags (to list more information on the file, including file size and whether it is executable). The flags I used were -la; I is the alias of long listing, giving more information, and a is the alias for all, meaning even hidden files are included. From here, I just needed to add a filter so that only files 1033 bytes long were

shown - this is done using the grep~1033 command. By piping these together, we are left with

```
find . type -f -exec ls -la \{\}\ \; | grep 1033
```

The password for bandit6 is DXjZPULLxYr17uwoI01bNLQbtFemEgo7

Level 7

The password for the next level is stored somewhere on the server and has all of the following properties:

- Owned by user Bandit7
- Owned by group Bandit6
- 33 bytes in size

Immediately, we know that we wish to search the entire file system. This can be done with find /. As before, we know that we want to look for all files, so we can introduce the flag -type f. We can then make use of the -user, -group and -size flags for the find command, giving us:

\$ find / -user bandit7 -group bandit6 -type f -size 33c

This works, but we get a slew of permission denied errors. This makes it difficult to identify where the correct file is. We want to somehow suppress these - this can be done by introducing 2>/dev/null to the command, giving us a final command of

\$ find / -user bandit7 -group bandit6 -type f -size 33c 2>/dev/null
The bandit7 password is HKBPTKQnIay4Fw76bEy8PVxKEDQRKTzs

Level 8

The password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt next to the word millionth

As we know that the password is next to the word millionth, we want to return all lines in the file that contain the world 'millionth'. This can be done by piping the contents of the file (using the cat command) into grep, as we have seen before. This gives a command of

```
cat data.txt | grep millionth
```

There is only one line containing the word millionth, so we immediately find our password. It is cvX2JJa4CFALtqS87jk27qwqGhBM9plV

Our guidance here is that the password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt and is the only line of text that occurs only once.

Immediately, by first thought was to use the uniq command, with the -u flag - this should filter a document and only return lines that occur once. As such, I ran

```
cat data.txt | uniq -u
```

However, this caused the entire file to be printed. On reading the uniq man page, I discovered that uniq only compares adjacent lines, and that I therefore needed to sort the file first. A working solution then is

```
cat data.txt | sort | uniq -q
```

The password to bandit 9 is UsvVyFSfZZWbi6wgC7dAFyFuR6jQQUhR

Level 10

The password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt in one of the few human-readable strings, preceded by several '=' characters.

As we are told that the password is 'one of the few human-readable strings' we can use the command strings, which will return all human-readable strings in the document. We also know that the password is preceded by a string of equals signs, we can pipe the output of this command into a grep search again. This reveals the password. The final command was

```
strings data.txt | grep ===
```

This reveals that the password to bandit 10 is trukLdjsbJ5g7yyJ2X2R0o3a5HQJFuLk

Level 11

The password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt, which contains base64 encoded data

In order to be able to read the contents of the file, we therefore need to decode it. This can be done with the command base64 -d data.txt. Running this reveals the password.

The password to bandit 11 is IFukwKGsFW8MOq3IRFqrxE1hxTNEbUPR

The password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt, where all lowercase (a-z) and uppercase (A-Z) letters have been rotated by 13 positions

To decode this message, we need to shift every letter back by 13 places. This can be done using the tr (transliterate) command, and an appropriate filter. Again, we can use cat data.txt | to pipe the file contents in. Our final command is

```
$ cat data.txt | tr [n-za-mN-ZA-M] [a-zA-Z]
```

The password for bandit 12 is 5Te8Y4drgCRfCx8ugdwuEX8KFC6k2EUu

Level 13

The password for the next level is stored in the file data.txt, which is a hexdump of a file that has been repeatedly compressed. For this level it may be useful to create a directory under /tmp in which you can work using mkdir. For example: mkdir /tmp/myname123. Then copy the datafile using cp, and rename it using mv (read the manpages!)

I started off here by following their suggestion, and creating / navigating to /tmp/lloyd. As we know that data.txt is a hexdump, the first thing to do is apply a reverse hexdump to this file. This is done using the following command

xxd -r > data

This pipes the output of the reverse hexdump command into a new file, 'data'. We know that this file has been compressed, but we don't know how. We can find this out by running file data. The output of this tells us that 'data' contains gzip compressed data. Therefore, we want to decompress it using gzip. Simply running gzip -d data throws an error, as it complanes that the suffix is unknown, so we can instead use

zcat -d data > data2.bin

This decompresses the file and stores the output in data2.bin, which was the original file name. Again, we can run the file command to find out how this has been compressed. This informs us that the file was compressed with bzip2. We can decompress it with

bzip2 -d data2.bin

Running this decompresses the output into a new file called 'data2.bin.out' but this is not a particularly nice name, so I renamed it to 'data3.bin' using the mv command. Again, I checked how it can been compressed using file.

These steps were repeated several times, before I eventually reached the original ASCII text file containing the password.

Password to bandit 13 is 8ZjyCRiBWFYkneahHwxCv3wb2a10RpYL

The password for the next level is stored in /etc/bandit_pass/bandit14 and can only be read by user bandit14. For this level, you don't get the next password, but you get a private SSH key that can be used to log into the next level. Note: localhost is a hostname that refers to the machine you are working on

Here, we are given bandit 14's private ssh key, which will allow us to log in as them. This is contained in a file called sshkey.private, in bandit 13's home directory. To pass a key in, we use the -i flag with our ssh command, like so:

ssh -i sshkey.private bandit14@localhost

This logs us in as bandit 14. From here, we can navigate to the directory given to us and simply read the password.

The password to bandit 14 is 4wcYUJFw0k0XLShlDzztnTBHiqxU3b3e

Level 15

The password for the next level can be retrieved by submitting the password of the current level to port 30000 on localhost.

The first thing we need to do is open a connection to localhost, on port 30000. This can be done with the command

nc localhost 30000

Once our connection is opened, we simply need to input the password to bandit 14, and the server gives back the password to bandit 15. This is BfMYroe26WYalil77FoDi9qh59eK5xNr

Level 16

The password for the next level can be retrieved by submitting the password of the current level to port 30001 on localhost using SSL encryption.

Here we need to follow a similar process to on the previous level, but here we need to use an ssl connection ratherthan simple TCP. This can be done with the following command:

openssl s_client -connect localhost:30001

As before, we then simply input the previous password to get the next one. The password for bandit 16 is cluFn7wTiGryunymYOu4RcffSxQluehd

The credentials for the next level can be retrieved by submitting the password of the current level to a port on localhost in the range 31000 to 32000. First find out which of these ports have a server listening on them. Then find out which of those speak SSL and which don't. There is only 1 server that will give the next credentials, the others will simply send back to you whatever you send to it.

The first thing that we need to do here is to find out which ports are open. This can be done using netcat, see below

nc -zv localhost 3100-3200

This tells us that there are five open ports. Using openssl s_client as above, we can test to see which ports are accepting ssl. When we find the correct port, we get an sshkey in response - this can be used to log into bandit17.

Level 18

There are 2 files in the homedirectory: passwords.old and passwords.new. The password for the next level is in passwords.new and is the only line that has been changed between passwords.old and passwords.new

All we need to do here is find the difference between two files. Fortunately, there's a command for that – diff. Running the command diff passwords.old passwords.new will identify which line has been changed, and give us the final password (as below). ueksS7Ubh8G3DCwVzrTd8rAVOwq3M5x The password to Bandit 18 is kfBf3eYk5BPBRzwjqutbbfE887SVc5Yd

Level 19

The password for the next level is stored in a file readme in the homedirectory. Unfortunately, someone has modified .bashrc to log you out when you log in with SSH.

As the guidance said, simply logging in with SSH here was no good, because whilst we could get onto the system we are immediately kicked off. However, as we also know that the password is stored in a file called readme in the home directory, I realised that I didn't need to log in and move around - I could simply take the file directly. This I did using the scp command, to copy a remote file to my desktop. This gave me the following command:

scp -P 2220 bandit18@bandit.labs.overthewire.org:readme ./tmp

Executing this (and entering the bandit18 password) logged into the server and copied the password file into the tmp folder in my working directory.

The password to bandit 19 is ${\tt IueksS7Ubh8G3DCwVzrTd8rAVOwq3M5x}$

To gain access to the next level, you should use the setuid binary in the homedirectory. Execute it without arguments to find out how to use it. The password for this level can be found in the usual place (/etc/bandit_pass), after you have used the setuid binary.

On logging in, we are met with an executable file called bandit20-do. The first thing I did was execute it (with ./bandit20-do). This then told me that it would let me run a command as another user. As I knew that the password was in a file called bandit20, at path /etc/bandit_pass/bandit20, I ran the command

\$./bandit20-do cat /etc/bandit_pass/bandit20

This revealed that the password for user bandit20 is GbKksEFF4yrVs6il55v6gwY5aVje5f0j

Level 21

There is a setuid binary in the homedirectory that does the following: it makes a connection to localhost on the port you specify as a commandline argument. It then reads a line of text from the connection and compares it to the password in the previous level (bandit20). If the password is correct, it will transmit the password for the next level (bandit21).

As before, the first thing I did upon finding an executable was to run it and see what happened (using ./suconnect). This told me that I needed to give it a port number to connect to. As my initial thoughts were that there was a process running on the server that I would need to communicate with, I did a quick port scan with netcat (nc -zv localhost 1-20000). However, upon running suconnect, I realised that this was not going on - it was reading from the port it was given. For that reason, I realised I needed to set up a simple web server, something I again decided to do with netcat. Setting up a server can be done with nc -l localhost -p 20133. However, we also need this server to serve up some data (bandit20's password). This can be done with the following command

echo GbKksEFF4yrVs6il55v6gwY5aVje5f0j | nc -l localhost -p 20133 &

Echo simply repeats the text, the pipe operator means this is passed into our server and the single & operator means that this process will execute in the background. Once this has been set up, we can simply run ./suconnect 20133 to connect to this. At this point, it successfully reads the password, and serves up the next one.

The password to bandit 21 is gE269g2h3mw3pwgrj0Ha9Uoqen1c9DGr

A program is running automatically at regular intervals from cron, the time-based job scheduler. Look in /etc/cron.d/ for the configuration and see what command is being executed.

Navigating into the relevant folder, and then examining cronjob_bandit22 using cat we can see that it is executing the bash script, stored at /usr/bin/cronjob_bandit22.sh. Inspecting this, again using cat, reveals to us that the script is copying the contents of the password file to a hidden file, /tmp/t706lds9SORqQh9aMcz6ShpAoZKF7fgv. Reading this gives us the password.

The password for bandit 22 is Yk7owGAcWjwMVRwrTesJEwB7WVOiILLI

Level 23

A program is running automatically at regular intervals from cron, the time-based job scheduler. Look in /etc/cron.d/ for the configuration and see what command is being executed.

Here, as before, we first need to navigate to our cron.d file, and read the relevant files. Having a look in cronjob_bandit23, we are once again directed to a bash script, as below:

```
#!/bin/bash
```

```
myname=$(whoami)
mytarget=$(echo I am user $myname | md5sum | cut -d ' ' -f 1)
```

echo "Copying passwordfile /etc/bandit_pass/\$myname to /tmp/\$mytarget"

```
cat /etc/bandit_pass/$myname > /tmp/$mytarget
```

The whoami command returns the username - in this case that is going to be bandit23. The variable 'mytarget' is assigned to the output of (echo I am user \$myname | md5sum | cut -d ' ' -f 1). We can therefore find the value of mytarget by running this command ourselves, but putting in bandit23 as \$myname. This gives us the address 8ca319486bfbbc3663ea0fbe81326349. As we know that the user's password is being saved here, we can just check out the contents of this to get the password.

The password for bandit23 is jc1udXuA1tiHqjIsL8yaapX5XIAI6i0n

A program is running automatically at regular intervals from cron, the time-based job scheduler. Look in /etc/cron.d/ for the configuration and see what command is being executed.

This level starts in the same way as those before. By finding the bash script being executed by cron, we get this:

#!/bin/bash

myname=\$(whoami)

cd /var/spool/\$myname

echo "Executing and deleting all scripts in /var/spool/\$myname:"...

From this, we know that we need to write a bash script that can be executed and will reveal the password. In order to write this, I first created a directory I could work in – /tmp/lloyd. I then wrote the following bash script:

#!/bin/bash

cat /etc/bandit_pass/bandit24 > /tmp/lloyd/pass

This I saved as script.sh, set as executable by all users (using chmod 777), moved it to /var/spool/bandit 24 and waited for cron to work it's magic. After a couple of minutes, the password for bandit24 was in my conveniently named pass file, and could be read with a simple cat command.

The password for bandit 24 is UoMYTrfrBFHyQXmg6gzctqAwOmw1IohZ

Level 25

A daemon is listening on port 30002 and will give you the password for bandit25 if given the password for bandit24 and a secret numeric 4-digit pincode. There is no way to retrieve the pincode except by going through all of the 10000 combinations, called brute-forcing.

Initially, I was tempted to use python to write the brute forcing script, as this is a scripting language I am particularly fond of, and most linux distributions have it installed by default. However, I realised that in some real world situations, this would not be an option, and I am working through this wargame to improve my own skills. For that reason, I decided to write a bash script instead.

As we know that we need to try all $\sim 10~000$ combinations, we need some kind of script. I created a script called bruteforce.sh with the command touch bruteforce.sh and then opened it with vim, a text editor.

I spent a period of time trying to write a bash script that would open a connection and then send the pincode + password combo. This is broadly what I would have done in python. However, I ran into some difficulty with this, as I kept getting problems with timeouts and the volume of processes I was trying to start. For that reason, I changed strategy, opting instead to save all the passwords into a list, and then dump this into the connection. One iteration of my first iteration was like this:

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2 password="UoMYTrfrBFHyQXmg6gzctqAw0mw1IohZ"
4 for a in `seq 0 9`; do
5
       for b in `seq 0 9`; do
6
           for c in `seq 0 9`; do
7
               for d in `seq 0 9`; do
                    code="$a$b$c$d"
8
9
                   echo $password\ $code | nc localhost 30002 &* ^C
10
               done
11
           done
12
       done
13 done
```

However, this was no good, so I replaced line 9 with the following: echo \$password\ \$code >> passwords.tx. This created a list of possible combinations. This can then be passed into the listener using cat passwords.txt | nc localhost 30002. This revealed the password.

The password of user bandit25 is uNG9058gUE7snukf3bvZ0rxhtnjzSGzG

Level 26

Logging in to bandit26 from bandit25 should be fairly easy... The shell for user bandit26 is not /bin/bash, but something else. Find out what it is, how it works and how to break out of it.

We need to find out what shell user bandit26 is using; this information is likely to be stored in the /etc/passwd file. So, we take a look in here with cat/etc/passwd | grep bandit26. This command gives us the output:

bandit26:x:11026:11026:bandit level 26:/home/bandit26:/usr/bin/showtext

A quick google search tells us that the final item in this reading is the shell being used. So, we have a look at that with cat /usr/bin/showtext. This gives us the following script:

```
#!/bin/sh
export TERM=linux
```

more ~/text.txt
exit 0

Checking permissions with chmod tells us that we cannot edit this file - this was my first thought. Similarly, there was no mileage in editing the /etc/passwd file - this also had the correct permissions enabled. In the end, I was seriously stuck, so ended up googling for a hint - a quick search pointed me to the fact that the way to prevent the script from fully executing was to trigger the more command in said script. This can be done by making the terminal window as small as possible. How does this help? Well, from here we can enter vim (by pressing v), and then once in vim we have all the handy commands that come with this -including, crucially, the ability to open a different file. In this instance, the file we want to open is /etc/bandit_pass/bandit26. This can be opened with:

:e /etc/bandit_pass/bandit26

The password for bandit 26 is: 5czgV9L3Xx8JPOyRbXh6lQbmIOWvPT6Z

Level 27

Good job getting a shell! Now hurry and grab the password for bandit27!

Overthewire.org made one crucial mistake here - they overestimated my success from the previous level. However, this level did give me the perfect opportunity to actually learn what they wanted me to learn from the previous level, and get a shell. This I did by running :set shell=/bin/bash from within vim. From here, I was free to move around and operate as if I were in a normal terminal instance, except all my commands had to be preceded with :!.

The first thing I did was to run:! 1s, to know what I was dealing with. This revealed the text.txt file that we knew about, and a bandit27-do executable. I duly executed this. This was a SETUID binary, in a similar way to the one we saw a few levels ago. As such, I simply used it to read the /etc/bandit_pass/bandit27 file using cat.

The password for bandit27 is 3ba3118a22e93127a4ed485be72ef5ea

Level 28

There is a git repository at ssh://bandit27-git@localhost/home/bandit27-git/repo. The password for the user bandit27-git is the same as for the user bandit27.

All we need to do here is to clone the git repo to the local machine. In order to do this, we first create a new directory in /tmp/. Then, we can simply run git clone plus the address that the instructions gave us. This creates a new folder

called **repo**, navigating into here we find a file called **README**, opening this we get the password.

The password for bandit28 0ef186ac70e04ea33b4c1853d2526fa2

Level 29

There is a git repository at ssh://bandit28-git@localhost/home/bandit28-git/repo. The password for the user bandit28-git is the same as for the user bandit28.

Again, here we navigate to our tmp directory, and work from here. We run git clone and then the address that we were given. When we are prompted for a password, we simply enter the password for bandit28 – this authenticates the connection. We can then proceed in the same was as in the previous level.

However, upon inspecting the README file, we find that bandit29's password has been redacted, and replaced with xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. No trouble, however, as git is a version control system. All we need to do here is to run git log, to get a record of the changes that were made. Bingo - here we find out that the most recent commit was to fix info leak. Presumably, then, all we need to do to checkout a previous version of the file, and that will contain the password. This can be done with

git checkout c086d11a

The hash being the signature of the commit we want to take a look at. We take a look into the README file now and, bingo - got it.

The password for bandit29 is bbc96594b4e001778eee9975372716b2

Level 30

s a git repository at ssh://bandit29-git@localhost/home/bandit29-git/repo. The password for the user bandit29-git is the same as for the user bandit29.

Begin as in the previous two levels. Again, simply reading the README.md file bears no fruits - we are told that there are "no passwords in production". This strikes me as a suggestion that there may be another branch, containing the password, as production in git often occurs on topic branches. Unfortunately, that's not the case in this scenario - I checked with git branch and discovered that the only branch that existed was the one checked out, master. However, running git log --all revealed some extra commits, that hadn't been shown with a simple git log. One of this was conveniently titled add some silly exploit, just for shit and giggles so lets have a look at this, again using git checkout <commit hash>.

We now have an extra folder called exploits that we can take a look at. Unfortunately, this contains just one file horde5.md, which is empty. Checking the permissions on this file bears no fruit - we discover that it has permissions 644 (rw for root, r only for others) and as such doesn't contain some secret script. Moving further back in the log, we can also see a commit add gif2ascii. Having a look at this is, unfortunately, similarly disappointing - gif2ascii.py is also an empty file. However, running git diff 786d5 from the commit that added gif2ascii.py, we discover that they are actually the same file, simply renamed. I continued to explore these files for a period of time, trying to run them with python and seeing if there was anything that I could do to get more out of them. There was not.

At this point, I turned back to my initial idea that there may be more branches than meet the eye - the "no passwords in production" sentence gave me this vibe, and it was reinforced by the fact that git log --all showed more than a simple git log - this suggests that there were more branches. So, a quick bit of research later, I found out that git clone doesn't automatically bring all branches to your local machine, and running git branch -r would allow us to check remote branches. Sure enough, there were several remote branches that hadn't come up previously. One such branch was origin/dev - this contained the password. Interestingly, the commit that added it add data needed for development had also been present when I ran git log --all - I just missed it as I was distracted by add some exploit for shits n giggles.

The password for bandit 30 is 5b90576bedb2cc04c86a9e924ce42faf

Level 31

There is a git repository at ssh://bandit30-git@localhost/home/bandit30-git/repo. The password for the user bandit30-git is the same as for the user bandit30.

Start in the same way as before. Reading the README.md file gives us the following:

just an empty file... muahaha

Interesting. Git log --all shows us that there is only one commit, and git branch -r shows us that there are no hidden branches. What else then? After digging through the .git directory for a while and having no luck, I remembered about git tagging. Running git tag should reveal to us any tags that had been applied to the git log in the past - sure enough, this tells us of a secret tag. Unfortunately, this does not actually seem to point at anything - I was unable to check out to tags/secret. However, using git show I was able to get what I initially thought was the hash of a commit, but when this wasn't the case I thought maybe it was bandit 31's password. It was.

Bandit 31's password is 47e603bb428404d265f59c42920d81e5

There is a git repository at ssh://bandit31-git@localhost/home/bandit31-git/repo. The password for the user bandit31-git is the same as for the user bandit31.

Start as before. Reading the README, we are told that this time we need to push a file called key.txt with contents May I come in?. We can create this file with

```
echo "May I come in?" > key.txt
```

And then commit it + push it with

git commit . -m "add key file" && git push

We are then prompted for bandit31's password; entering this we are told that there is nothing to commit, working tree is clean. Not quite what we were hoping for. Instead, we can try git add key.txt – doing so tells us that it this is included in the .gitignore. We can get past this by simply running git add key.txt -f. Then, running git push sorts us out and gives us the file.

The password for bandit 31 is 56a9bf19c63d650ce78e6ec0354ee45e

Level 33