

WEB SECURITY

Defense Against the Dark Arts 101



FUNDAMENTAL CONCERNS

Authentication

Trusting that someone is who they say they are.

Communication

Transferring data through potentially unreliable middlemen.

Authorization

Giving resource access to the right people.

Control

Limiting or understanding the capabilities of agents.

OWASP TOP 10 (2013)

Server-side code execution

Allows for impersonation

Client-side code execution

Access control can be circumvented

Vulnerable default/inherited settings

Data is insecurely transmitted, stored, or simply overshared

Users can do things they shouldn't be allowed to do

Abuse the target website's trust in the browser

Third-party tools are vulnerable

Abusable open-ended forwarding

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poor **authorization**

insecure **communication**

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	Exploitability	Prevalence	Detectability	Impact
Injection	easy	common	average	severe
Broken Authentication	average	widespread	average	severe
XSS	average	very widespread	easy	moderate
Direct References	easy	common	easy	moderate
Security Misconfiguration	easy	common	easy	moderate
Data Exposure	difficult	uncommon	average	severe
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AUTHER (CURRENTLY)



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[HTTP://HUMBLE-HOMES.COM/TINY-HOUSE-PRECAIOUSLY-PERCHED-ON-A-ROCK-WITHSTANDS-SEVERE-FLOODING/](http://humble-homes.com/tiny-house-precariouly-perched-on-a-rock-withstands-severe-flooding/)



WORKSHOP

- **Game with 5 rounds**
- **Each pair is a team**
- **Each round**
 - **lecture and questions**
 - **defense phase**
 - **prep phase**
 - **attack phase**
 - **review**



WORKSHOP

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uncovering secrets
improper access
injection
cross-site scripting
data theft

UNCOVERING SECRETS (SECURITY MISCONFIGURATION)



UNCOVERING SECRETS

- **Assume attacker has access to codebase**
- **Defense vulnerable if...**
 - **application secrets are easy to discover**
 - **files are improperly shared**
- **Bad stuff: app impersonation, decryption**



UNCOVERING SECRETS

- ◉ Assume attacker has access to codebase
- ◉ Defense vulnerable if...
 - ◉ application secrets are easy to discover
 - ◉ files are improperly shared
- ◉ Bad stuff: app impersonation, decryption

not (yet) about user secrets

IMPROPER ACCESS (MISSING ACCESS CONTROL)



IMPROPER ACCESS

- **Assume attacker is client**
- **Defense vulnerable if client can act outside of authorization**
- **Bad stuff: depends on the action and resource**



IMPROPER ACCESS

- Assume attacker is client
- Defense vulnerable if client can **act outside of authorization**
- Bad stuff: depends on the action and resource

still not (yet) about user secrets



IMPROPER ACCESS

```
<div id="important-thing" ng-show="isAdmin">  
  <button ng-click="doSomethingImportant()"></button>  
</div>
```



some HTML

the problem





IMPROPER ACCESS

```
<div id="important-thing" ng-show="isAdmin">  
  <button ng-click="doSomethingImportant()"></button>  
</div>
```



some HTML

the problem



```
<top frame> [Preserve log] [Show]
```

```
> var scope = angular.element('#important-thing').scope();  
< undefined  
> scope.isAdmin = true;  
< true  
> scope.$digest();  
< undefined  
>
```



IMPROPER ACCESS

- **Frontend “access control” is actually just good UX**
- **True access control comes from backend**
- **Considerations (be thorough)...**
 - **requested resource**
 - **requested action**
 - **agent making the request**



BEWARE OVERPROTECTION

```
// "safe server"
var app = require('express')();
app.use(function (req, res) {
  res.status(403);
  res.send('NONE SHALL ENTER');
});
app.get('/', function (req, res) {
  res.sendFile(__dirname + '/index.html');
});
...
```



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My house is safe from intruders because it does not have a door.



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INJECTION



INJECTION

- **Assume attacker is non-admin client**
- **Defense vulnerable if client can execute code on server**
- **Bad stuff: umm, everything?**



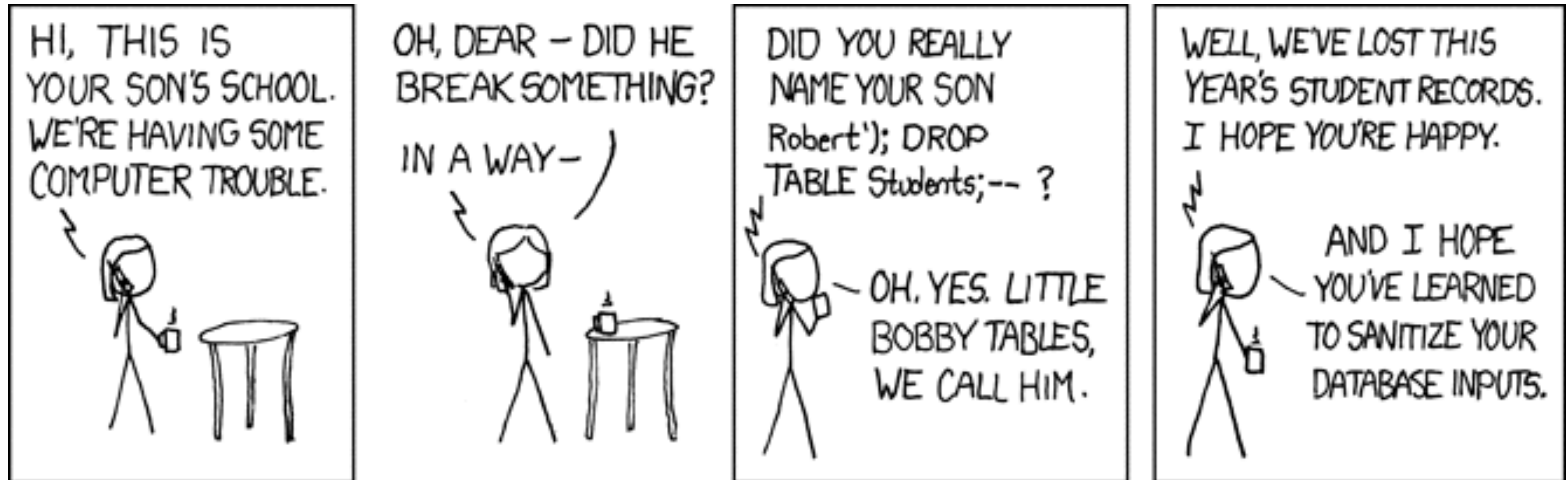
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INJECTION



[HTTPS://XKCD.COM/327/](https://xkcd.com/327/)



INJECTION *server-side execution of attacker-defined code*



```
...  
// at end of middleware stack  
app.use(function (req, res, next) {  
  // allow client to specify *any* module  
  var theModule = require(req.body.modulePath);  
  // allow client to specify *any* method  
  var method = theModule[req.body.methodName];  
  // allow client to specify *any* arguments  
  var args = req.body.args;  
  // blindly invoke!  
  var result = method.apply(theModule, args);  
  res.json(result);  
});  
...
```





INJECTION *server-side execution of attacker-defined code*



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  var args = req.body.args;  
  // blindly invoke!  
  var result = method.apply(theModule, args);  
  res.json(result);  
});  
...
```

```
POST /whatever HTTP/1.1  
...  
{  
  "modulePath": "../user.model",  
  "method": "destroy",  
  "args": [{}]  
}
```





INJECTION *server-side execution of attacker-defined code*



User.destroy({});

```
...  
// at end of middleware stack  
app.use(function (req, res, next) {  
  // allow client to specify *any* module  
  var theModule = require(req.body.modulePath);  
  // allow client to specify *any* method  
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CROSS-SITE SCRIPTING



XSS

- **Assume attacker is non-admin client**
- **Defense vulnerable if client can execute code on *another* client**
- **Bad stuff: yeah pretty much everything**
- **Two flavors: “stored” and “reflected”**



STORED XSS



4 Comments

The Atlantic

1 Login ▾

♥ Recommend

🔗 Share

Sort by Oldest ▾



`<script>alert('i am an xss attack');</script>`

LOG IN WITH



OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS (?)



STORED XSS



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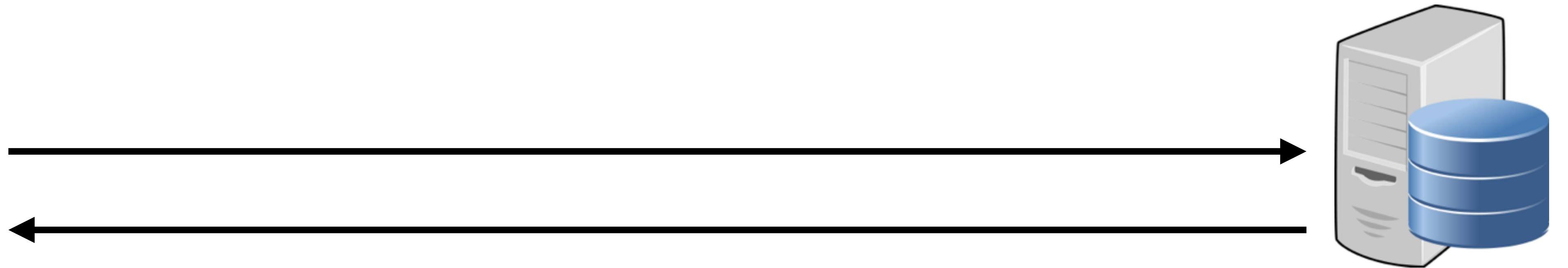
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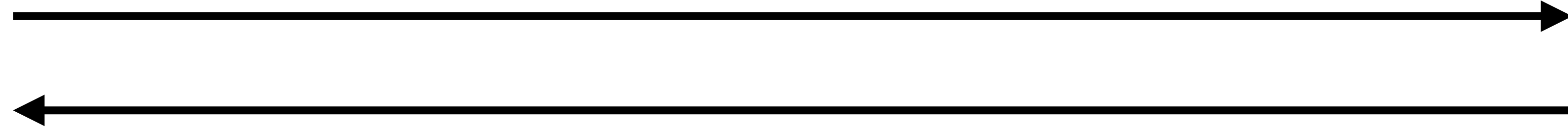
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`alert('xss attack');`



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STORED XSS





REFLECTED XSS

- **Server sends parts of request in response**
- **Attacker forms link with script in it**
- **Victim clicks link**
- **Server responds with script in link**
- **Script runs on victim's browser**

DATA THEFT

(BAD AUTH / DATA EXPOSURE)



"IDENTITY THEFT"

- **Assume attacker has access to middlemen and database**
- **Defense vulnerable if communication or storage exposes passwords**
- **Bad stuff: user impersonation**



PASSWORD SECURITY

THE WORST WAY

create

p@ssword^{HTTP}→ p@ssword → p@ssword

database

p@ssword

verify

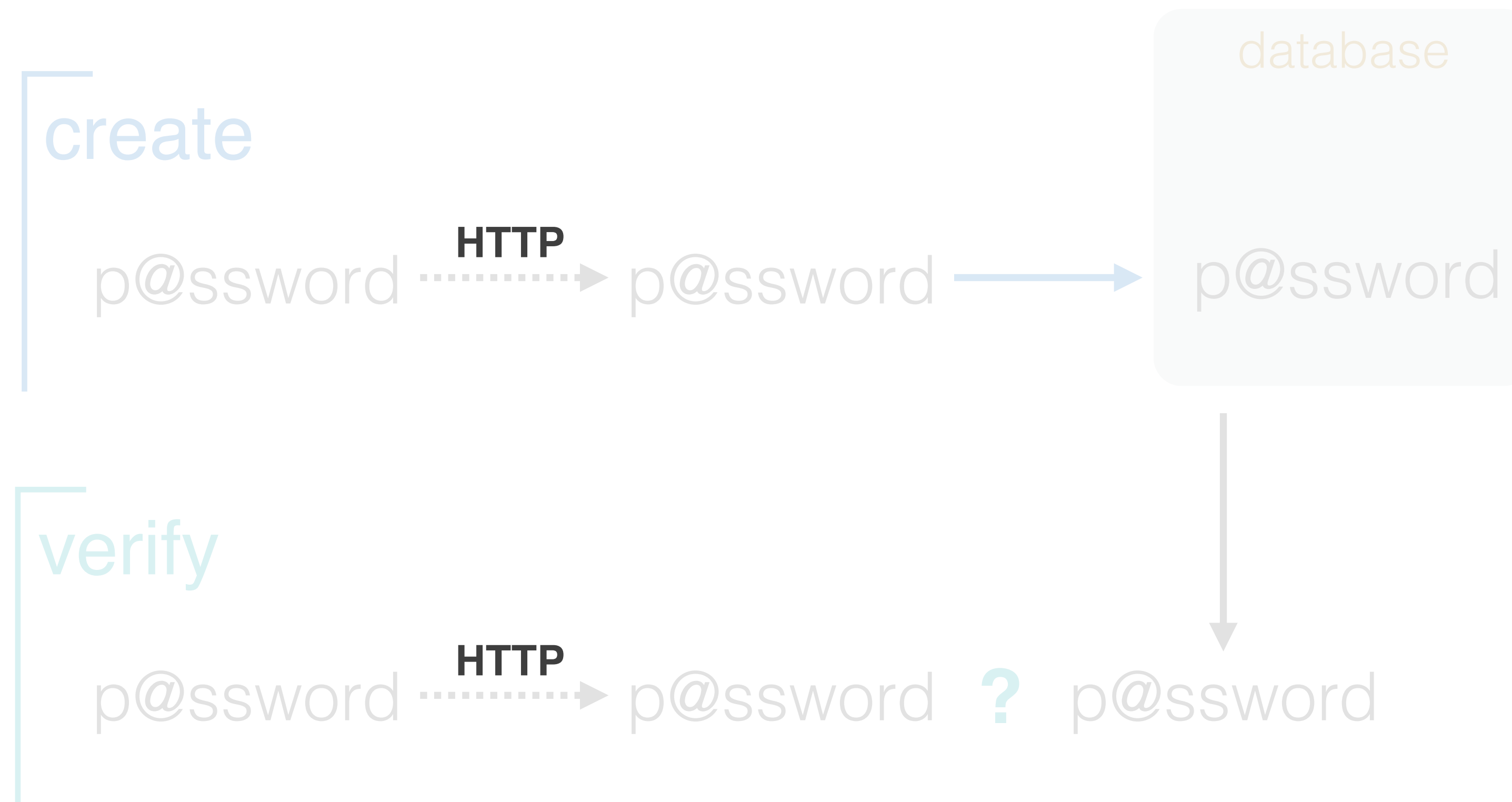
p@ssword^{HTTP}→ p@ssword ? p@ssword





PASSWORD SECURITY

THE WORST WAY





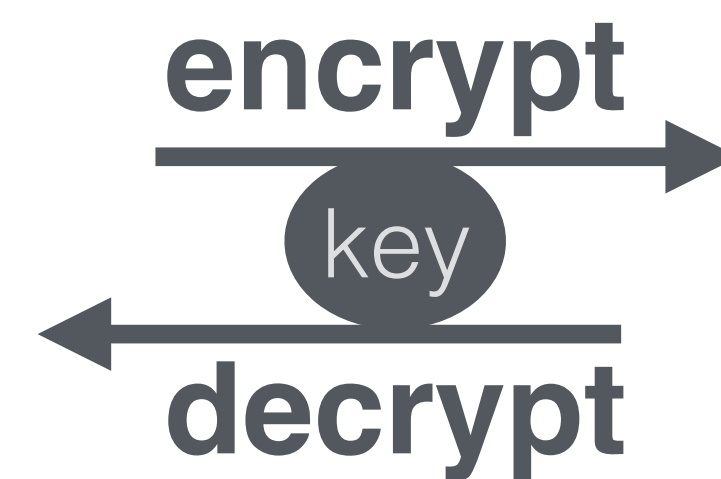
ENCRYPTION

plaintext

scheme

ciphertext

word



981kje

HTTP
encryption
+ “authentic” server

HTTPS

HTTP
encryption
+ “authentic” server } SSL

HTTPS

"AUTHENTIC" SERVER

- **Has an SSL certificate**
- **Digitally signed**
- **Forms a web of trust**
- **Self-signed in development**

HTTPS IN PRACTICE

With openssl generate a private key with...

```
$ openssl genrsa -out key.pem 2048
```

Then generate self-signed SSL certificate with...

```
$ openssl req -x509 -new -nodes -key key.pem -days 1024 -out cert.pem
```

Now use node's `https` library with this key and certificate



PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE COMMUNICATION

create



verify





PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE-ISH STORAGE

create



verify





PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE-ISH STORAGE

create



verify



What do we do with the key??? Uh oh...



HASHING

string

algorithm

hash

word



jads82



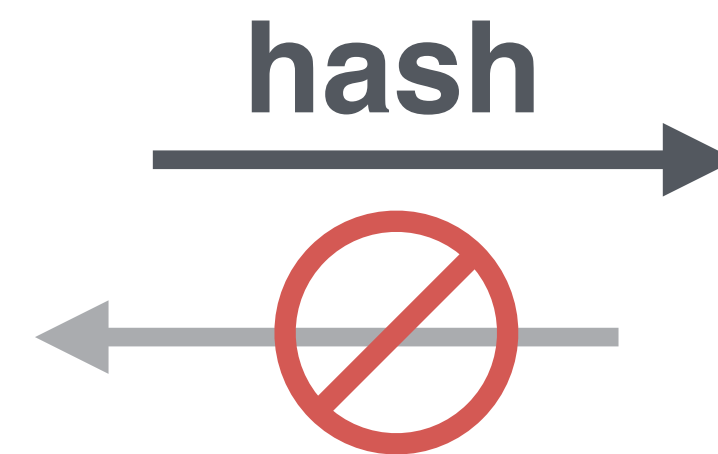
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PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE-ISH STORAGE

create



verify





PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE STORAGE

create



verify





GOOD HASH KEY FUNCTION

Should be slow

Ultimately, this will hurt would-be attackers more than it will hurt you.

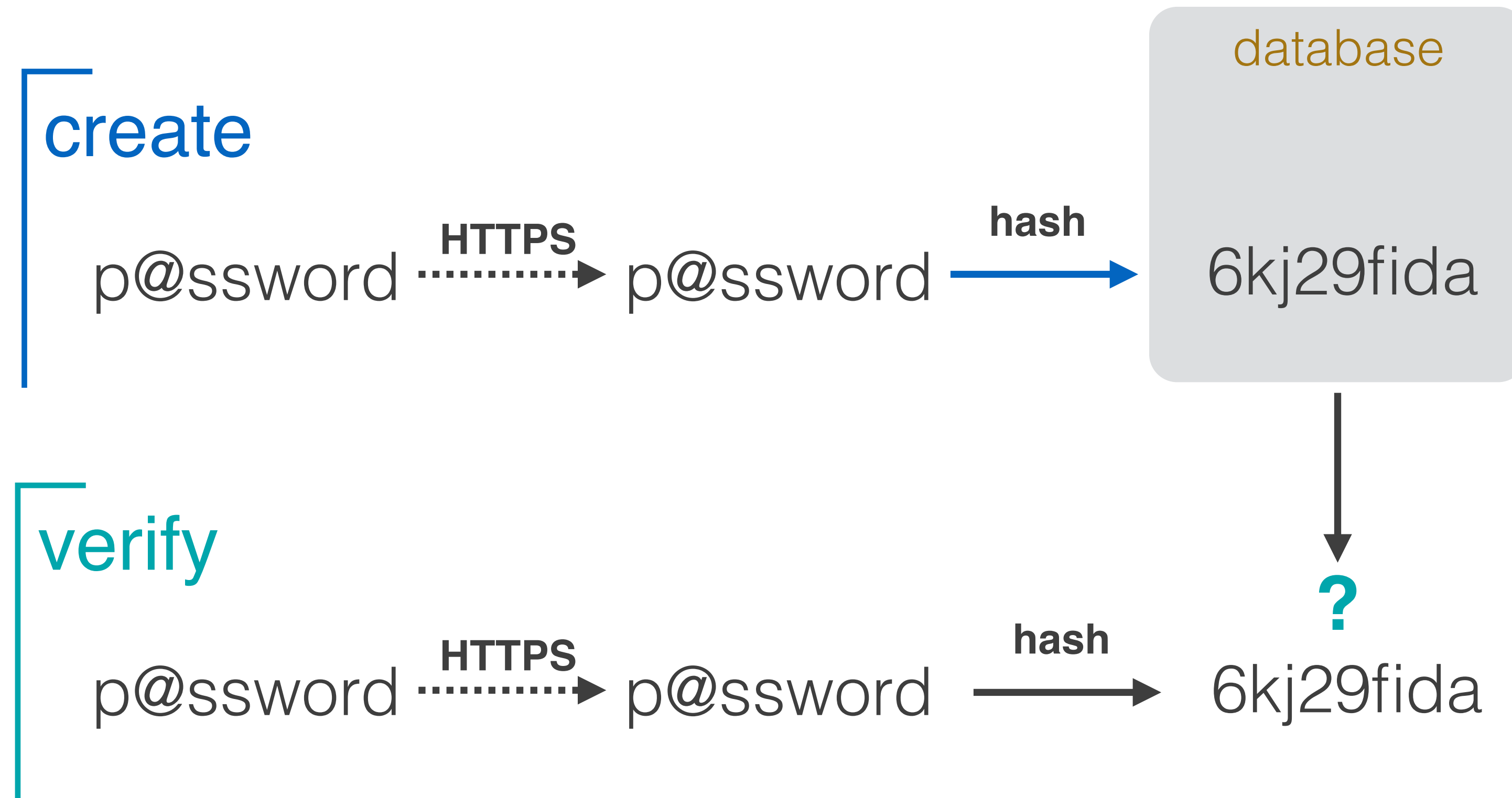
Should have a low collision frequency

Fewest possible duplicates. Or else two inputs could be indistinguishable.



PASSWORD SECURITY

Can we make it even better? **SECURE STORAGE**





SALT

- **Random string, unique to each user**
- **Added before hashing password**
- **Two users with the same password have different hashes**
- **Hashes are not computable ahead-of-time**



PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE STORAGE

create



verify

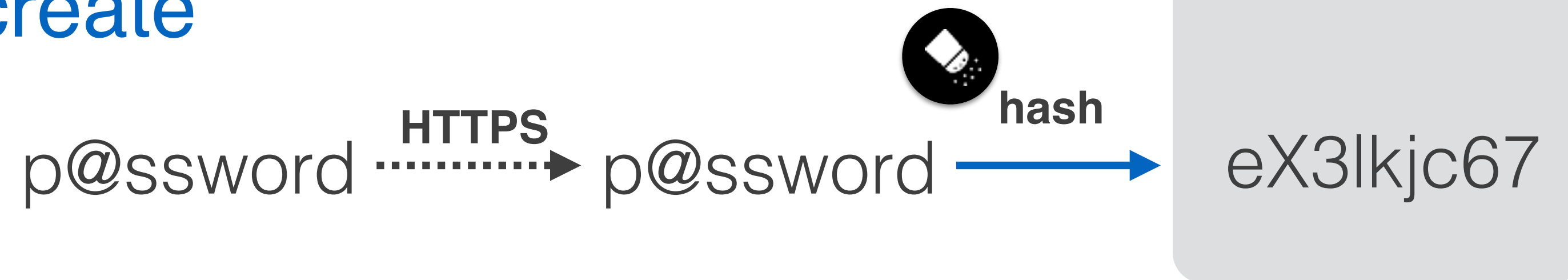




PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE STORAGE

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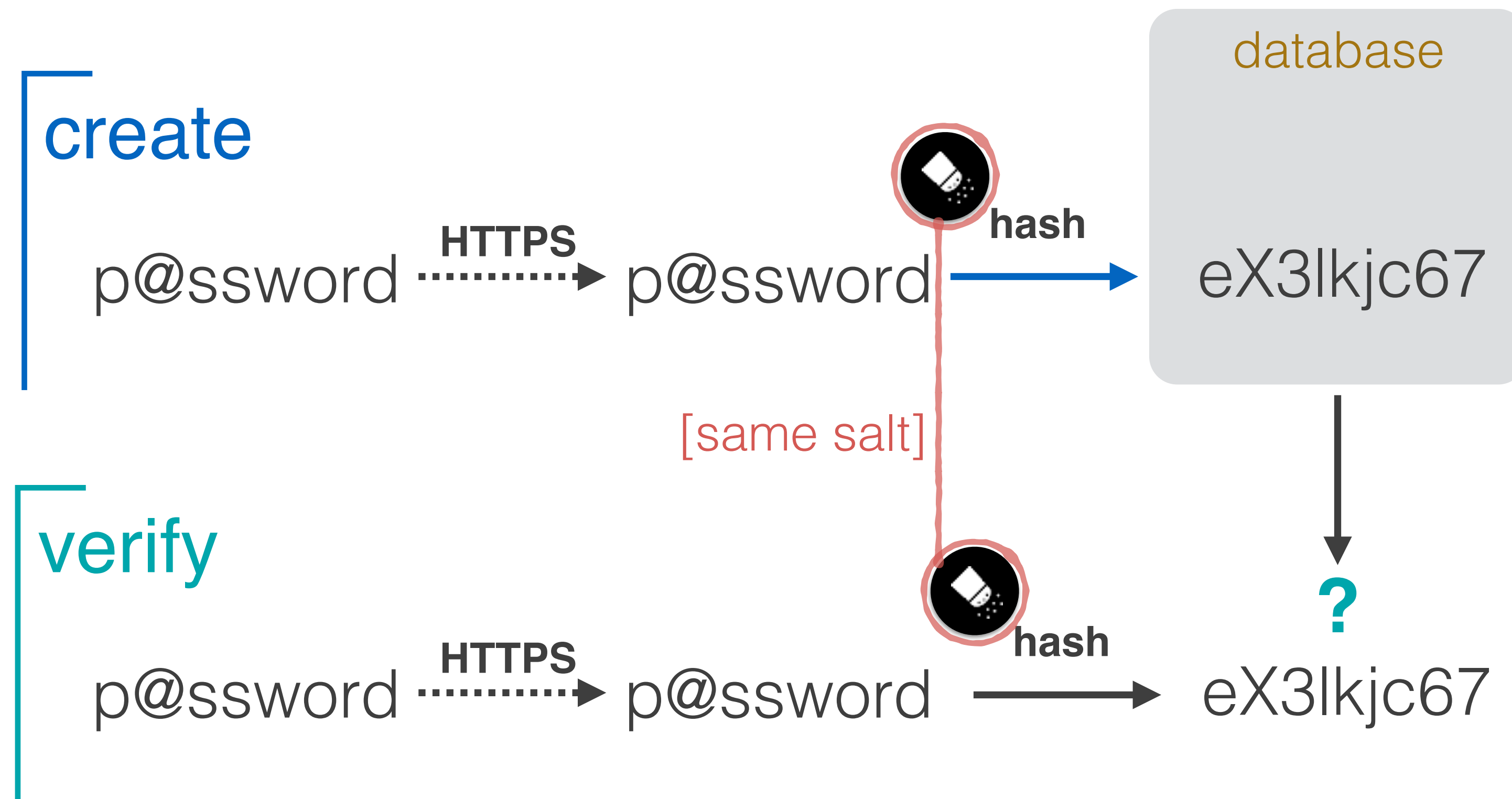
verify





PASSWORD SECURITY

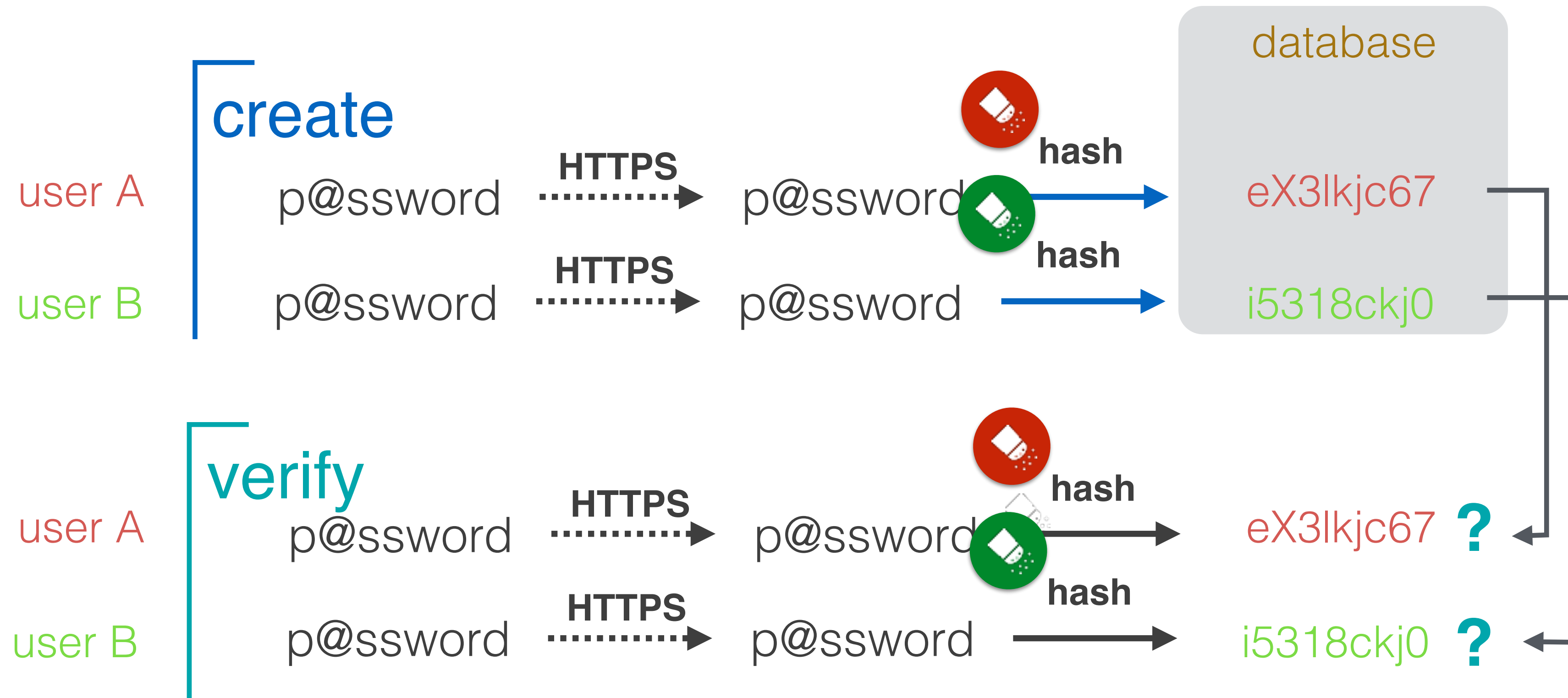
SECURE STORAGE





PASSWORD SECURITY

SECURE STORAGE



HASHING IN PRACTICE

```
// built-in node library
var crypto = require('crypto');
var salt = crypto.randomBytes(16);
var iterations = 1;
var bytes = 64;
var buffer = crypto.pbkdf2Sync('password', salt, iterations, bytes);
var hash = buffer.toString('base64');
// ...
```




OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Broken authentication flow**
- **Oversharing data**



BROKEN AUTH

- **Assume attacker is guest client**
- **Defense vulnerable if signup or login are improper**
- **Bad stuff: user impersonation, admin impersonation**



OVERSHARING

- **Assume attacker is non-admin client**
- **Defense vulnerable if attacker can see sensitive info of another**
- **Bad stuff: failed user privacy, NSA loves you**



GOOD AUTH

- **Communication is secure**
- **Storage is secure**
- **Cannot set privileges via signup**
- **Logging in *requires* username and password**
- **Data is not inadvertently shared**

RECAP

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Lesson: do not execute arbitrary code on the server.

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Lesson: verify credentials, use HTTPS, hash and salt passwords.

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Lesson: clients should only be able manipulate resources indirectly, through the server.

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Lesson: be wary of default security configurations.

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Unvalidated Redirects	Abusable open-ended forwarding	example

Lesson: encrypt data in transit and storage; share only proper fields.

Injection	Server-side code execution	example
Broken Authentication	Allows for impersonation	example
XSS	Client-side code execution	example
Direct References	Access control can be circumvented	example
Security Misconfiguration	Vulnerable default/inherited settings	example
<u>Data Exposure</u>	Data is insecurely transmitted, stored, or simply overshared	example
Missing Access Control	Users can do things they shouldn't be allowed to do	
XSRF	Abuse the target website's trust in the browser	example
Vulnerable Components	Third-party tools are vulnerable	example
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Lesson: appropriately restrict certain users to certain actions on certain resources.

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Lesson: do not only use cookies for session authentication.

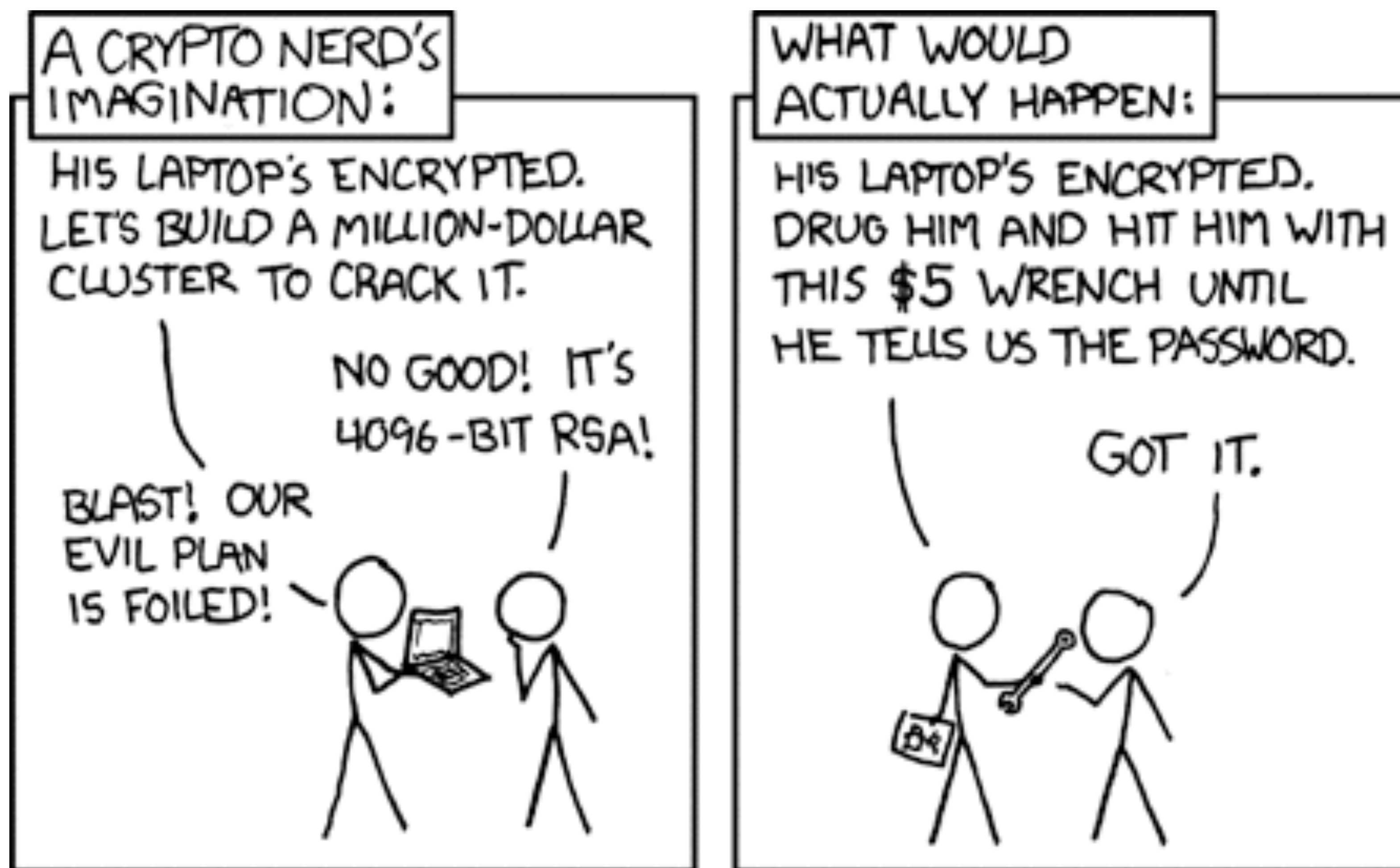
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Lesson: carefully consider the libraries you use.

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Lesson: forwards should be defined by the developers, not the users.

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