

Active Sniffing Analysis

COMP 8506 – Assignment 3

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Objective

The purpose of this assignment is to become familiar using switch-sniffing tools to perform and analyze the resulting packet captures when actively sniffing the targeted host machines. To simulate a real-world environment, we are using a network switch to orchestrate these attacks illustrated by Christopher Russel in his paper “Penetration Testing with dsniff”. To simulate having internet connection, we had a dedicated laptop act as the gateway and other machines directly connected through the network switch. This setup allows us to perform various attacks, i.e. ARP Spoofing, or DNS Spoofing, without affecting a public domain network.

Tools Used

1. Dsniff

Dsniff is a collection of tools for network sniffing and penetration testing. The main purpose in using this tool is to passively monitor a network for interesting data (emails, passwords, critical files, etc....). The effective tools that dsniff provides attackers include arpspoof or dnsspoof that is used for intercepting network traffic between two or more host machines.

2. Arpspoof

Arpspoof was used in all attacks listed in this document. It is part of the dsniff suite and is arguably the most important of all the applications. arpspoof allows us to poison ARP records on a network, so that we can place ourselves between two hosts which will allow us to sniff all traffic from a machine.

3. Ettercap

For this exercise, we used Ettercap as a frontend for dsniff to capture a password sent over telnet. Ettercap is a great network security tool that allows a user to simulate man in the middle attacks on a given LAN with the inclusion of live network traffic sniffing, and content filtering.

4. Wireshark

For this exercise, we used Wireshark to capture and analyze the traffic between two machines. In the case of password sniffing, using Wireshark allowed us to see the simplicity of sniffing passwords that was sent through Telnet.

Attacks Carried Out

Pre-requisite for all attacks: ARP Spoofing

All the attacks presented in this document were running the same ARP spoofing attack. This was accomplished via the arpspoof program included in the dsniff suite. Usage is extremely simple, only needing to run the program while specifying the target machines.

Figure 1.1 – Initializing arpspoof on the sniffing host machine

```
arcwil@wil-laptop:~  
File Edit View Search Terminal Help  
[arcwil@wil-laptop ~]$ sudo arpspoof -i enp0s20f0u2 -t 10.42.0.157 10.42.0.1  
[sudo] password for arcwil:  
0:50:b6:1f:3e:37 78:24:af:d:b4:ef 0806 42: arp reply 10.42.0.1 is-at 0:50:b6:1f:3e:37  
0:50:b6:1f:3e:37 78:24:af:d:b4:ef 0806 42: arp reply 10.42.0.1 is-at 0:50:b6:1f:3e:37
```

As shown in figure 1.1, we have initialized arpspoof and begin broadcasting falsified ARP messages over the LAN in the hopes of catching and linking with a vulnerable machine host. Once ARP messages are being broadcasted, the victim machine believes the malicious machine is in fact the gateway machine, and the gateway machine believes we are the victim. We will be sniffing traffic using Wireshark or any program of our choice, while simply forwarding packets once we receive them.

Attack One: URL Sniffing using urlsnarf

Our first attack that we tried out was to replicate a URL sniffing attack using `urlsnarf`. After arp spoofing, we ran `urlsnarf`, specifying which interface to listen on, and we began seeing all HTTP requests in real time.

Figure 1.2 – URL Sniffing through urlsnarf targeting

[illegible]

This is the most basic of attacks and is just an easy way to filter out HTTP requests. Using Wireshark or another packet sniffing application we can do the same thing, but with more difficulty as we would have to write a filter - urlsnarf just automates the process. As shown in Figure 1.2, our sniffing machine has initialized urlsnarf and successfully captured/logged any HTTP requests made from the targeted host machine in the LAN. This tool is useful for an attacker because once they gain knowledge of your internet browsing, they can unleash phishing websites targeting the user specifically or launching fake websites that links the legitimate URL to their malicious site.

Attack Two: Password Sniffing via Telnet

For our second attack, we replicated a password sniffing attacking using Ettercap (a frontend for dsniff) to capture a password sent from one machine host to another over telnet. In Christopher's paper, he explained that this attack can simply be carried out by running dsniff on the terminal on the sniffing host machine. Since Ettercap acts as a front end that encapsulates and makes use of dsniff, we felt that using this tool was much easier as everything is done through visual representation while offering a more in-depth analysis of the capture.

Figure 2.1 Password Sniffing via Telnet

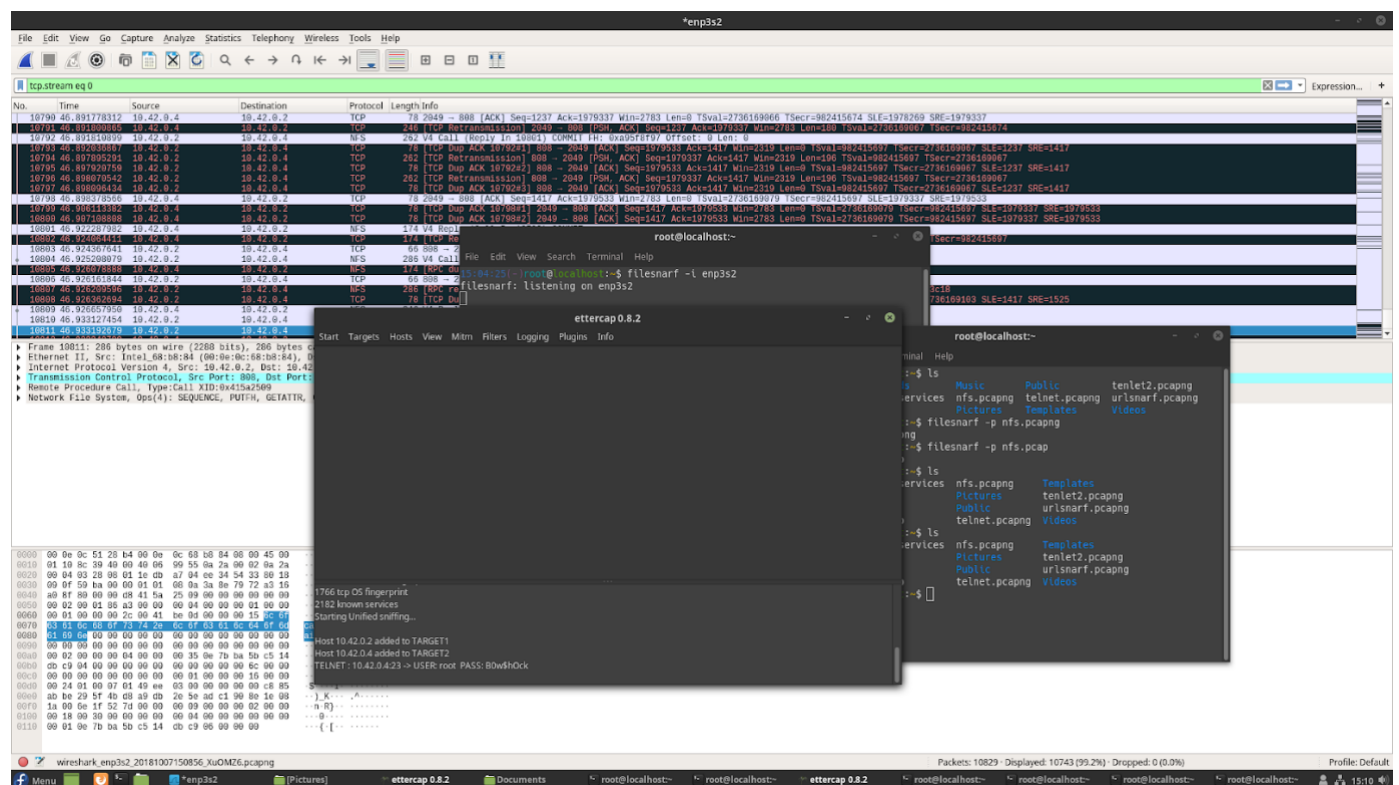


Figure 2.2 – Wireshark TCP Stream of the same password captured in an Ettercap session

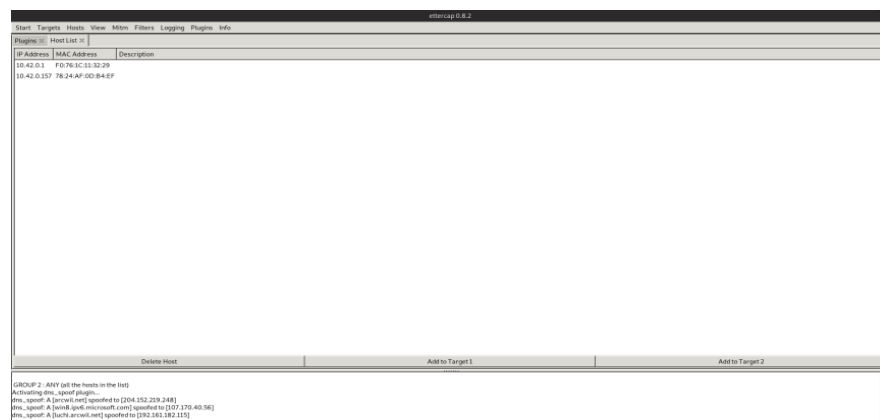


As shown in Figure 2.1, we can see the Ettercap instance notifying us about the password it detected during the telnet session between the two host machines in our given LAN. As telnet has no encryption, all information sent is represented through plaintext. The main benefit of using Dsniff/ Ettercap is that it simplifies the process of password sniffing by automating the capture while notifying the user when a password has been entered. We also took advantage of Wireshark's TCP Stream tool, as shown in figure 2.2, that goes through the packets captured through Ettercap and simply displays the same results founded using the tool.

Attack Three: DNS Spoofing (Man-in-the-Middle Attack)

Our final attack will be implementing a man-in-the-middle attack through DNS spoofing. By using dnsspoof, we can redirect all traffic bound for a certain domain to one of our choosing. This has the most potential for abuse, as we can theoretically redirect users to a fake bank login page, or social media page which can then log their password and other vital information. To do this, we first ran dnsspoof, specifying an interface and a host file (in regular /etc/hosts format). We then configured the iptables rules on the attacking machine as well as the default rules from Ettercap to block the victim's DNS traffic, allowing us to relay them to our desired site.

Figure 3.1 – Ettercap initializing a DNS Spoofing Session on the host machines in the LAN



In our example shown in Figure 3.1, we redirected a user attempting to access arcwil.net to a webserver on our local machine. We can see all DNS requests coming from the victim, and any values that match entries in the specified host will be sent to the user instead of a normal response from the DNS server. As a result of this attack, the user will now see our compromised login page while we are monitoring their every move.

IDS Effectiveness

For this test, we had installed and configured Suricata with community rules on one of the machines in our LAN. We ran Suricata in pcap mode with the intentions of checking if these attacks would be caught in a packet capture. In all cases, Suricata did not detect the ARP poisoning nor DNS Spoofing as the findings are presented in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1 – Suricata Scanning Directory of all files

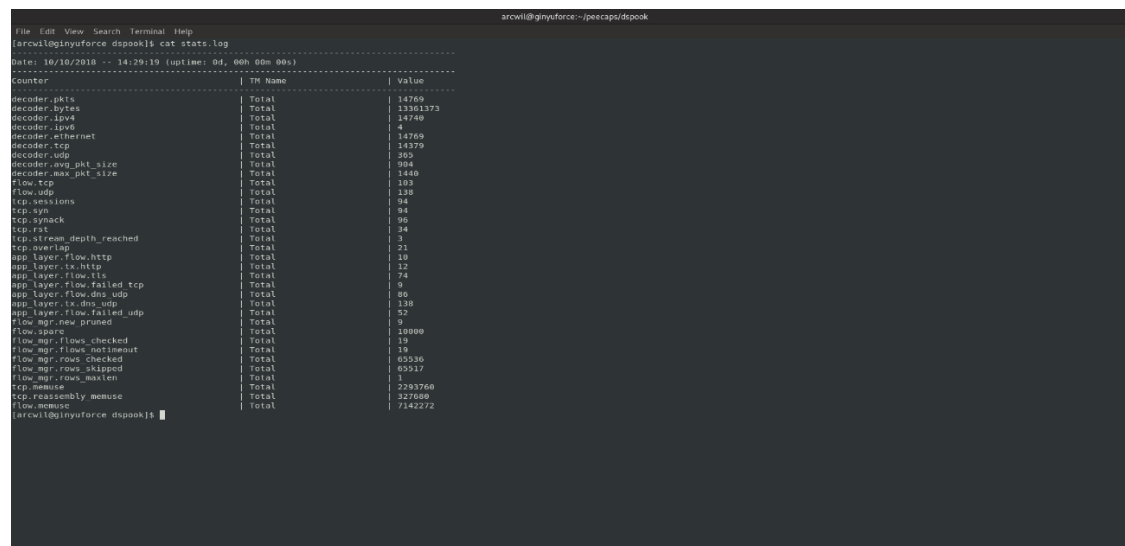
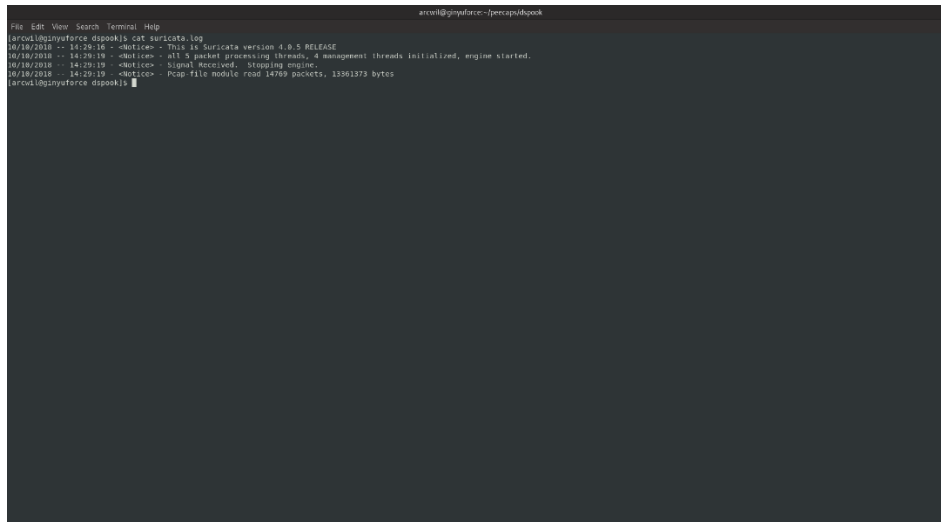


Figure 4.2 – Suricata Scanning the desired pcaps and producing no results



```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
arcol@gruyforce:~/pcapshqook
[arcol@gruyforce dqook]$ cat suricata.log
10/10/2018 -- 14:29:16 - <notice> - This is Suricata version 4.0.5 RELEASE
10/10/2018 -- 14:29:19 - <notice> - all 5 packet processing threads, 4 management threads initialized, engine started.
10/10/2018 -- 14:29:19 - <notice> - Signal Received, Stopping engine.
10/10/2018 -- 14:29:19 - <notice> - Pcap file module read 14709 packets, 13361373 bytes
[arcol@gruyforce dqook]$
```

The first figure displays Suricata running the full scan through all the captures while applying the community rules to each one of them. The second figure displays the log file after the scan, which resulted in no raised flags. The reason why our IDS didn't pick up anything is because dnssniff and the tools associated with the program are not intrusive scans, but rather more passive scanning without alerting any defense perimeters.

Defense Against These Attacks

As ARP spoofing is the common factor between all our attacks, the easiest way to mitigate an attack like this is to define static ARP entries. If we cannot spoof ARP entries, we cannot place ourselves as the man in the middle, making our attacks impossible.

If we cannot set static ARP entries, we can still prevent some of these attacks in other ways. The easiest attack to mitigate would be the password sniffing attack. As we sniffed a plaintext password, the easiest solution would be to not use telnet, and instead use a secure service like SSH instead.

While not part of the attacks we used, macof is a part of the dsniff suite that floods a network with fake addresses, in an attempt to make the switch fail into an always open mode, essentially turning the switch into a hub. This would make sniffing traffic easy, at the cost of being an extremely noisy attack. We did attempt to use macof, however it failed on the two switches we had available to us.