

Unloading the GuLoader

labs.vipre.com/unloading-the-guloder/

Posted by **VIPRE Labs**

We recently came across a spike of spam email samples containing GuLoader. This malware was discovered last year in 2019 and became more popular among cyber criminals during the coronavirus outbreak. GuLoader is usually attached to a spam email related to bill payments, wire transfers or COVID malspam (you can see a detailed analysis of the [COVID malspam here](#)). GuLoader is written in VB5/6 and compressed in a .rar/.iso file. We can see on the graph below the increase of GuLoader which our customers have received:

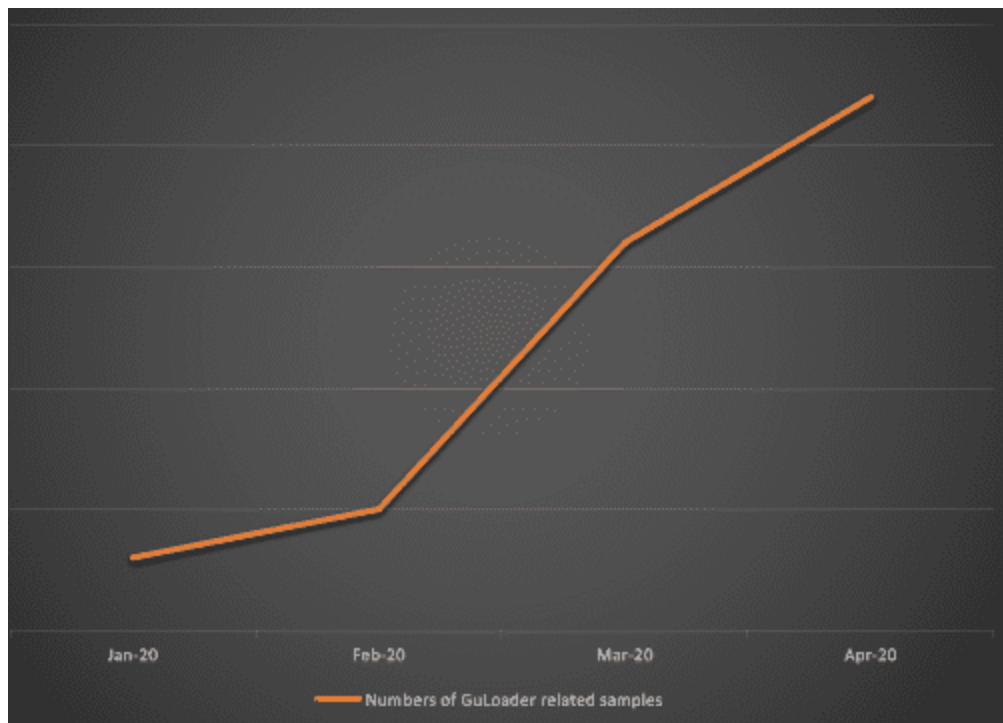



Figure 1.0 Data collected from January to April 2020 showing the increase in GuLoader related samples


From : [REDACTED]
To : [REDACTED]
Cc :
Bcc :
Subject : Overdue Payment – Invoice 45533728
Attachment(s) :  file_invoice.png

An evaluation of our records shows that your account is lengthy overdue. The connected bill is now due for the past 10 days.

If a charge has been made, ought to you in particular inform us while this was performed so we may want to update our information.

If you've got any queries concerning this invoice, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards.
[REDACTED]

From : [REDACTED]
To : [REDACTED]
Cc :
Bcc :
Subject : FW: Due Invoice Payment - de.diabgroup.com - Wire Transfer Document
Attachment(s) :  Wire Transfer Swift.png

Hello : [REDACTED] ,

FYI

Attached is a transfer slip from our bank for the payment made to your account

Following the trail mail below, our mother company requested we remit payment to you on their behalf.

All necessary info in the attachment.

I await your kind reply and feedback.

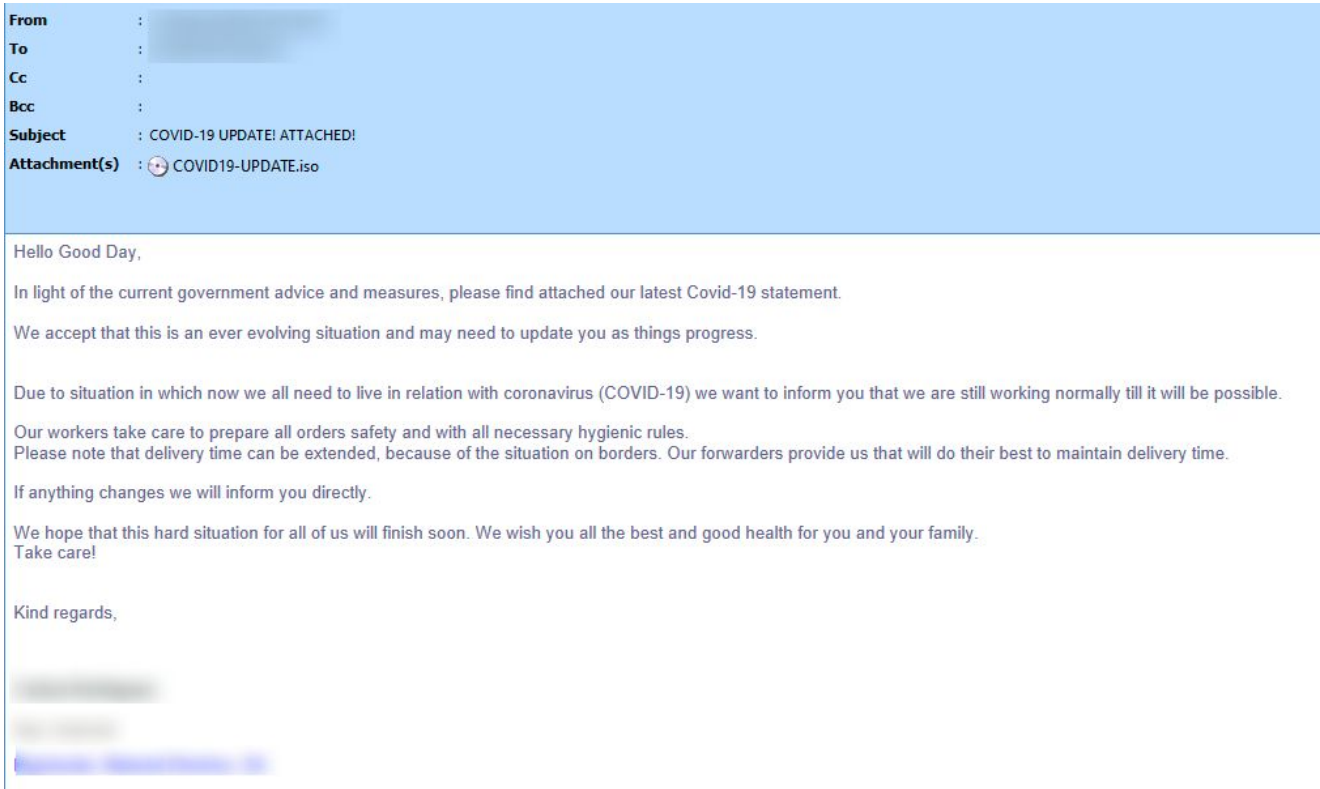


Figure 2.0 Spam emails containing GuLoader

GuLoader is popular for distributing Remote Access Trojan (*RAT*) tools. These allow the attackers to control, monitor, or steal information from the infected machine. This malware downloader utilizes cloud hosting services (*Microsoft OneDrive or Google Drive*) to keep its payload encrypted.

Dig Deeper Inside of GuLoader

Analyzing the GuLoader sample, the malware is indeed a VB5/6 executable. Also, a compiled Visual Basic sample can be recognized by an imported DLL called *MSVBVM60.DLL*.

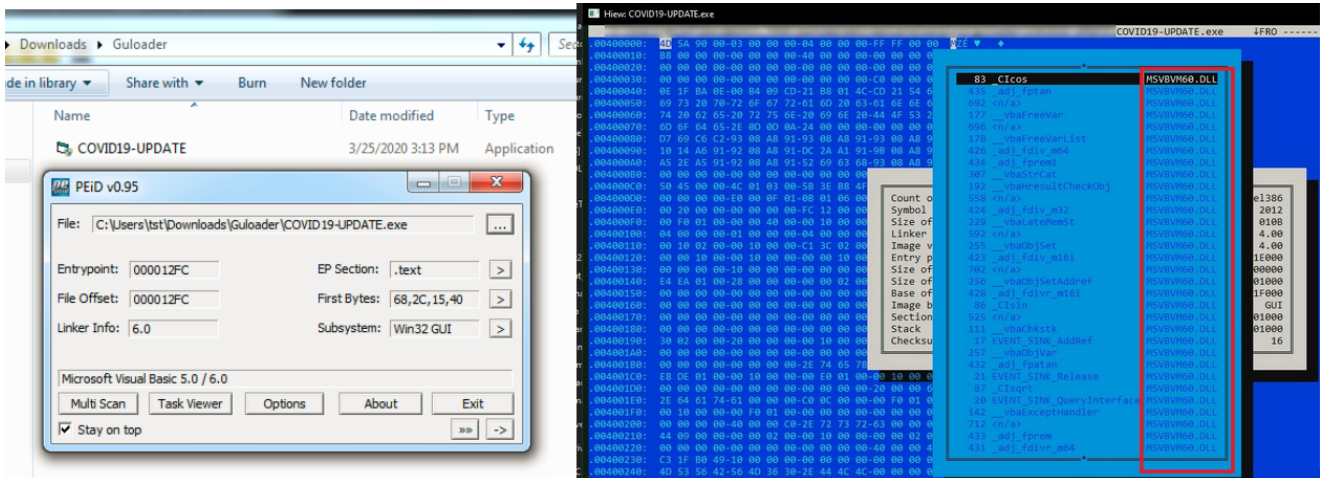


Figure 3.0 GuLoader sample written in VB5/6 and the msvbvm60.dll

Analyzing further, we've found the malware's encrypted malicious code. This malware allocates virtual memory and decrypts the encrypted malicious code using XOR.

```

> 881C17 MOV EBX, DWORD PTR DS:[EDX+E01]
  3D 3748A95F CMP EAX, 5FA94837
  81FF EC1785F CMP EDI, F28517EC
  31F3 XOR EBX, ESI
  81FF F24A1A7 CMP EDI, 771A4AF2
  81FB 89E286A CMP EBX, A8B6E289
  F8 CLC
  FC CLD
  111C10 ADC DWORD PTR DS:[EDX+EAX], EBX
  81FA 9E4CE41 CMP EDX, 19E44C9E
  3D 58CD0B38 CMP EAX, 380BC058
  83C2 04 AND EAX, 4
  81FA 8F2ABB0 CMP EDX, 5BB2A8F
  81FF D2135EF CMP EDI, F95E1302
  81FA 6831000 CMP EDX, 3168
  ^ 75 BD JNE SHORT 0040793A
  
```

Figure 4.0 The decryption routine

Encrypted Code		Decrypted Code	
00402765	EF 78 3B 24 6E 94 6E AF 8B 9C 3B 26 6E 94 63 A5	00350000	01 00 00 02 00 00 55 89 25 18 00 00 00 5B 83
00402766	06 9A 02 63 2A AD FB DE 86 00 12 26 6E 11 C4 DE	00350001	E8 0E 87 45 44 3F C0 F8 2B 24 29 00 00 85 FF F0
00402767	00 35 00 26 6E 94 00 66 62 1F 7B 32 07 44 00 26	00350002	64 A1 30 00 00 00 8B 40 BC 8B 40 14 D9 00 00 00
00402768	E5 0C 13 07 15 98 00 26 5C 94 4E D6 00 17 40 36	00350003	00 58 20 01 78 0C 23 00 2E 00 70 64 83 78 10
00402769	40 E1 D2 AD 2E 84 02 D9 E7 D1 3F AD 26 A8 38 FE	00350004	2E 75 E9 8B 40 10 39 FF 87 45 04 83 58 3C 01 D0
00402770	E5 0C 43 AD 2B 90 BE EF 6F 4C 00 6E 7E 1D 76 2E	00350005	00 58 78 00 45 04 85 C9 01 00 00 00 18 87 4D
00402771	E5 DC 27 AF 23 98 C3 AD 26 00 B2 6B 7E 1F 4B 06	00350006	00 48 1C 89 4D 0C F8 0B 40 24 89 4D 10 8B 70 20
00402772	EB 6B 38 53 6A A5 F2 E1 2B 80 24 9D 5F 5B C3 AD	00350007	05 FF C3 75 04 31 C9 C7 45 14 1F 00 31 CF F0 48
00402805	78 97 6E 22 07 44 6A 78 32 7C 02 6E 94 65 7D	00350008	16 03 55 04 D9 D0 51 56 52 87 20 00 00 5E 59
00402815	E7 6B 00 53 7E 97 4E 22 5F 54 5D AD 6A D0 B0 53	00350009	7F FF 28 45 14 74 07 83 06 04 4E 3B 4D 00 75 DF
00402825	62 6C 38 53 6A 1F 0F 00 6D E1 3F AF 1B 9C BE D9	0035000A	85 C9 02 75 10 82 75 04 31 C9 8B 04 4E 83 75
00402835	07 0F 20 26 6E 6C 63 7E 91 E1 3F D9 38 1D 7E 2A	0035000B	0C F8 03 75 04 8B 34 86 83 75 04 87 75 00 85 FF
00402855	07 44 D2 5D 75 94 3B 7F E7 D9 23 0F 0F 8F 3E 26	0035000C	E9 98 18 00 00 00 F8 58 58 FF 75 04 FF D6 8F 45 0C
00402865	57 6B 1C CE A5 07 3B 26 E7 11 A3 26 6E 94 BE EF	0035000D	3F FF 58 E8 CB 23 00 00 89 85 98 00 00 85 C9
00402875	07 32 27 26 6E 6C 62 FF BE 7D 92 3A 6E 94 02 FD	0035000E	E9 A6 1C 00 00 F8 59 89 00 E9 87 1C 00 00 39 D8
00402885	24 7C 96 05 6E 94 D0 3D 25 A5 E9 74 3A C7 02 D9	0035000F	0F FF 28 45 14 74 07 83 06 04 4E 3B 4D 00 75 DF
00402895	91 44 63 A5 96 98 46 07 04 94 51 D9 91 01 A3 26	00350010	FF D0 58 83 F8 0C 7D 21 6A 00 6A FF FF 95 98 00
004028A5	6E 94 C3 CE 0E 6B C4 D9 E5 D8 1F 2E 95 7B AF 0F	00350011	00 00 F8 E8 E0 FF FF 8B 4C 24 00 00 8B 01 40 89
004028B5	6F 2C 3A 26 6E 94 P9 2E 6E 7D P9 3F 6E 94 E2 F6	00350012	01 00 01 00 00 00 C2 00 00 E9 C2 1F 00 00 39 D8
004028C5	EB 62 62 AF 23 08 C7 CF 05 8E 3B 26 34 7C 5A 85	00350013	00 00 85 99 4D 1C FC E9 2B 1A 00 00 5A E8 63 23
004028D5	6E 94 02 63 4A 1D P9 A3 98 7C 61 37 6E 94 B2 76	00350014	00 87 45 24 87 C2 85 F6 E8 5A 11 00 00 89 50
004028E5	6A AD CD B6 04 94 51 26 91 E1 1F 4C 6E FE 3B 4C	00350015	04 39 F6 9B 6A 00 6A 00 FF 75 24 6A 00 6A 6A
004028F5	6E FE 3B CE 16 81 3B 26 57 4F B0 6B 72 6C D2 95	00350016	00 00 85 76 5A FC E8 27 23 00 00 89 85 3B 01
00402905	74 94 3B A3 98 CE C7 CE 49 B7 3B 26 E7 11 0B 27	00350017	90 8B 4D 1C E9 EC 19 00 00 5A E8 04 23 00 00 BE
00402915	6E 94 51 26 04 94 51 37 04 6A BE D0 91 44 02 D0	00350018	00 10 20 1C 81 EE 00 10 00 00 6A 04 00 3B 00
00402925	FE 1F 76 3A 07 78 22 26 6E CE D3 22 4D 94 3B 98	00350019	00 89 75 64 39 D0 89 E0 F8 83 C7 64 53 85 F6 6A
00402935	6E 04 1B 38 EF 78 3B 36 6E 94 51 22 06 94 00 26	0035001A	EE 22 00 00 85 C0 75 CC 8B 45 68 89 45 20 85 F6
00402945	6E 1D 4E 42 57 4F B2 C0 96 17 F8 42 3B 11 CD 4C	0035001B	3F F6 98 E8 19 14 00 00 E8 89 18 00 00 89 45 4C
00402955	6E 53 7E 4E 6E 94 3B 26 92 17 F8 22 3D FE C4 CE	0035001C	00 83 11 00 00 00 30 30 21 00 00 83 F8 01 74 55 39
00402965	00 B6 3B 26 6E 94 4E E0 E5 D1 53 AF 2B B4 BE D0	0035001D	D0 C7 85 1C 01 00 00 00 74 F4 85 F6 FC 83 79 74 81 75
00402975	57 62 0B CE 77 80 3B 26 86 1D 2B 26 6E 1D 7E 6A	0035001E	2E E8 C8 02 00 00 8B 7D 20 81 C7 00 26 00 00 57
00402985	86 27 2A 26 6E 7C E1 07 6E 94 B8 DE 6F E0 6E 1F	0035001F	00 00 85 76 FC 06 22 00 00 C6 44 0F F6 7E FC C6 44
00402995	85 53 BE 3A 6F 94 3B 26 6E 94 3B DE 86 C6 3B 26	00350020	0F FC 62 C6 44 0F FE 73 90 57 E8 26 02 00 00 E9
004029A5	6E A9 02 23 6E 94 4F D2 EB 62 C7 A5 13 E0 3A 53	00350021	00 83 70 74 01 75 00 00 28 86 02 00 83 F8 01 74 05
004029B5	40 7C F6 24 6E 94 B0 5B 4E 15 FC 26 48 94 3B 71	00350022	00 12 03 00 00 83 7D 74 01 0F 85 84 00 00 8B 00
004029C5	EB 62 D3 20 4C 94 3B E0 2A 9B C1 58 57 62 FB 62	00350023	5D 02 00 00 85 F6 83 F8 01 0F 84 54 00 00 39 D8
004029D5	61 68 59 E0 2A 9B 05 55 FE C3 03 00 6C 94 3B CF	00350024	00 6A 00 6A 00 F0 FF 75 24 6A 00 6A 00 4A
004029E5	70 84 3B 26 57 4F C3 A3 98 17 46 5A 6E E0 2D D0	00350025	00 E8 3A 24 00 00 FF 85 10 01 00 00 E8 4E 01 00
004029F5	ED 19 4F 27 1E 9E D3 A0 6C 94 3B A5 96 9E 4F 23	00350026	00 6A 00 39 D8 FF 85 01 00 00 8B 8B 7B 8B 85
00402A05	86 86 3B 26 6E 17 46 52 6F 9D BE D2 6E 94 3B CE		

Figure 5.0 The encrypted malicious code (left) and the decrypted malicious code in allocated virtual memory (right)

The decrypted code will be in virtual memory 0x350000. Checking this memory in memory map, it has read, write, and execute (RWE) access. We've now dumped the decrypted code to conduct analysis.

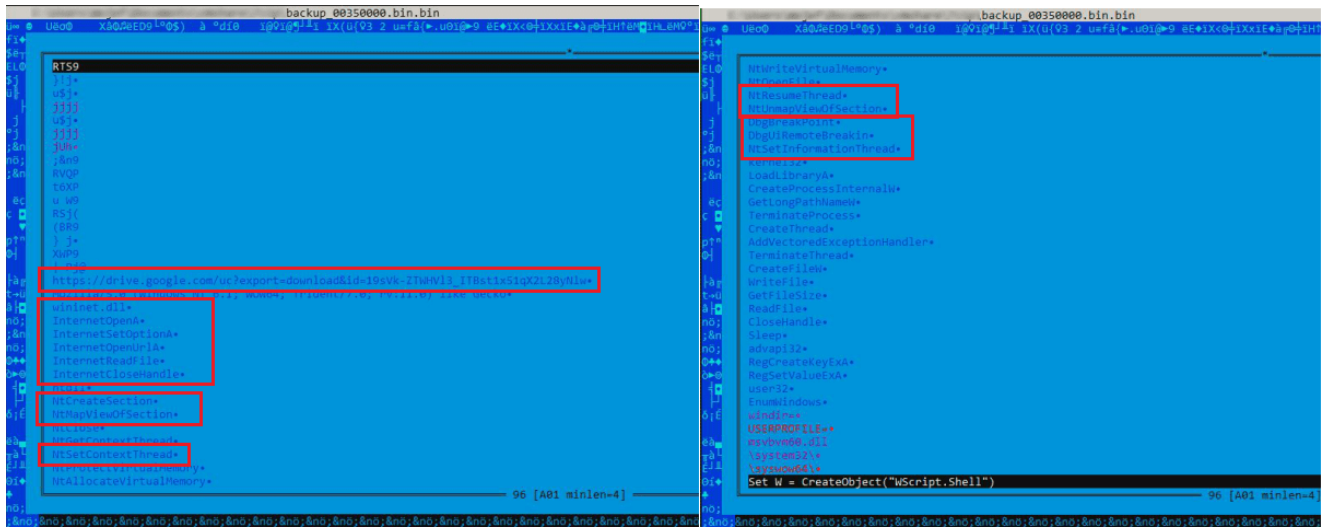


Figure 6.0 The dumped memory and the familiar strings that were found in the decrypted code

Checking the strings on the decrypted code, we can see clearly the cloud hosting service URL that stores the encrypted payload (*https://drive.google.com/export=download&id=19sVk-ZTWHVl3_ITBst1x51qX2L28yNlw*). We can also see familiar DLLs like wininet.dll and APIs like InternetOpenA, InternetOpenUrlA, InternetSetOptionA etc. The wininet.dll contains internet related functions like InternetOpenA and these functions will probably be used to connect to the URL that contains the encrypted payload.

Analyzing what's inside of the decrypted code, we can see that the malware will find the GetProcAddress function in kernel32.dll because GetProcAddress is important in finding and calling other API functions. In order to do this, the malware will first access the Process Environment Block (PEB) -> LDR data -> InMemoryOrderModuleList and then get the address of the module kernel32.dll.

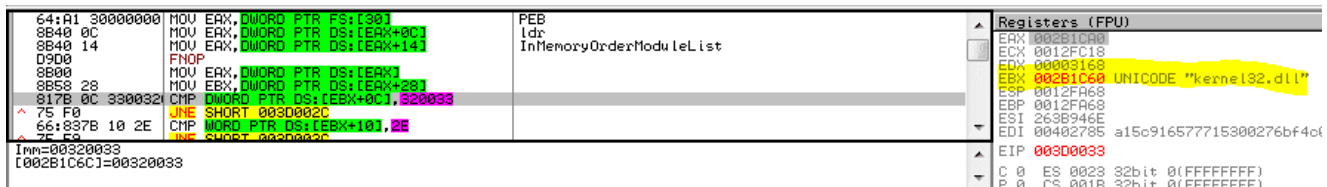


Figure 7.0 Accessing the PEB and getting the address of kernel32.dll

After obtaining the address of kernel32.dll and finding GetProcAddress in kernel32.dll, the malware will resolve the following series of APIs:

- LoadLibraryA
- TerminateProcess
- EnumWindows
- NtProtectVirtualMemory

- NtSetInformationThread
- NtAllocateVirtualMemory
- DbgBreakPoint
- DbgUiRemoteBreakin

After this, we ran into some anti-analysis techniques. The anti-analysis was used by malware authors to make it more difficult to analyze the malware.

Here are some of the techniques we encountered:

An anti-debugger that hides the thread from the debugger. In order to perform this, the API NtSetInformationThread is needed. They set the second parameter (*ThreadInformationClass*) to 0x11 which is equivalent to ThreadHideFromDebugger. It will hide the thread from the debugger so it can't be easily debugged. For example, the thread will continue to run, but the debugger will not be able to receive any events related to the thread.

```

00350186 FC          CLD
00350187 E8 27230000 CALL 003524B3
0035018C 8985 30010000 MOV DWORD PTR SS:[EBP+130],EAX
00350192 6A 00      PUSH 0
00350194 6A 00      PUSH 0
00350196 6A 11      PUSH 11
00350198 6A FE      PUSH 254
0035019A 85F6      TEST ESI,ESI
0035019C FF00      CALL EBX
0035019E 39F6      CMP ESI,ESI
NtSetInformationThread

```

Figure 8.0 Calling of NtSetInformationThread to hide the thread from the debugger

Thread attach in a debugger can be seen in the thread window. On figure 9.0, we can see the before and after the thread is hidden from the debugger. The before part is where we can see the main thread and its thread ID which is 11DC. The after part is where the main thread is hidden from the debugger.

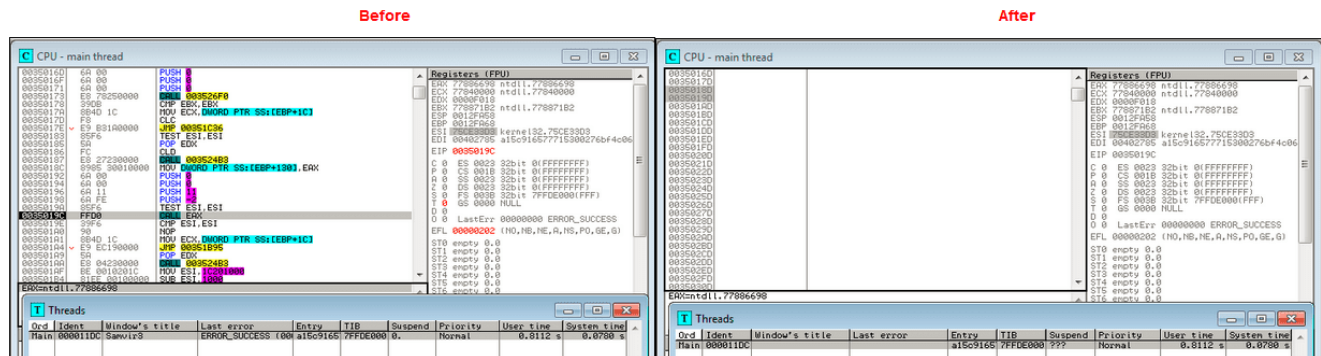


Figure 9.0 Before and after the hiding of thread

There's another technique that will first call the *NtProtectVirtualMemory* function to set the permission of ntdll's .text section as *PAGE_EXECUTE_READWRITE*. The ntdll.dll contains the following APIs, *DbgBreakPoint* and *DbgUiRemoteBreakin*, that will be used to perform anti-attach. The malware prevents the debugger from attaching to a process by hooking the *DbgBreakPoint* and *DbgUiRemoteBreakin* functions. For example, it will patch *DbgBreakPoint* and *DbgUiRemoteBreakin* functions that will trigger the process to exit or to designate an unknown location. Like in *figure 12.0*, *DbgUiRemoteBreakin* will call *0x00000000* address and exit.

884424 04	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR SS:[ESP+4]	
89E2	MOV EDX, ESP	
89C2 14	ADD EDX, 14	
52	PUSH EDX	
51	PUSH EAX	
83EA 04	SUB EDX, 4	OldProtect Parameter
52	PUSH EDX	NewProtect Parameter = 0x40
83EA 04	SUB EDX, 4	RegionSize Parameter
52	PUSH EDX	BaseAddress parameter
6A FF	PUSH -1	ProcessHandle
FFD0	CALL ERX	NtProtectVirtualMemory
C2 0400	RETN 4	

Figure 10.0 Calling of NtProtectVirtualMemory to set the permission of NTDLL.DLL

884424 18	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR SS:[ESP+18]		
89D6	TEST EBX, EBX		
C600 90	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX], 90		Code patch of
87F6	TEST EBX, EBX		DbgBreakPoint function
884424 1C	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR SS:[ESP+1C]		
C600 6A	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX], 6A		
D540 01 00	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+1], 0		
C640 02 88	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+2], 88		
85F6	TEST ESI, ESI		
90	NOP		
8895 9C000000	MOV EDX, DWORD PTR SS:[EBP+9C]		The DbgUiRemoteBreakin
8950 03	MOV DWORD PTR DS:[EAX+3], EDX		function patch code
C640 07 FF	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+7], FF		
C640 08 00	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+8], 00		
C640 09 C2	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+9], C2		
C640 0A 04	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+0A], 04		
C640 0B 00	MOV BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+0B], 0		

Figure 11.0 Patching of DbgBreakPoint and DbgUiRemoteBreakin for anti-attach technique

778DF125	6A 08	PUSH 8	778DF125	6A 08	PUSH 8
778DF127	68 E8078977	PUSH OFFSEI 778907E8	778DF127	BB 00000000	MOV EAX, 0
778DF12C	EB D3AFBFF	CALL 77892C8C	778DF12C	FFD0	CALL EBX
778DF131	64:01 18000000	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR FS:[18]	778DF12E	C2 04FF	RETN 0FF04
778DF137	8B40 30	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR DS:[EAX+30]	778DF131	64:01 18000000	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR FS:[18]
778DF13A	8078 02 00	CMP BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+2], 0	778DF137	8B40 30	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR DS:[EAX+30]
778DF13E	75 09	JNE SHORT 778DF149	778DF13A	8078 02 00	CMP BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+2], 0
778DF140	F605 D482FE7F	TEST BYTE PTR DS:[7FFE02D4], 02	778DF13E	75 09	JNE SHORT 778DF149
778DF147	74 28	JE SHORT 778DF171	778DF140	F605 D482FE7F	TEST BYTE PTR DS:[7FFE02D4], 02
778DF149	64:01 18000000	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR FS:[18]	778DF147	74 28	JE SHORT 778DF171
778DF14F	F680 C8F00000	TEST BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+0FCA], 20	778DF149	64:01 18000000	MOV EAX, DWORD PTR FS:[18]
778DF156	75 19	JNE SHORT 778DF171	778DF14F	F680 C8F00000	TEST BYTE PTR DS:[EAX+0FCA], 20
778DF158	8365 FC 00	AND DWORD PTR SS:[EBP-4], 00000000	778DF156	75 19	JNE SHORT 778DF171
778DF15C	E8 8F4FF9FF	CALL 778748F0	778DF158	8365 FC 00	AND DWORD PTR SS:[EBP-4], 00000000
778DF161	EB 07	JMP SHORT 778DF16A	778DF15C	E8 8F4FF9FF	CALL 778748F0
778DF163	33C8	XOR EAX, EAX	778DF161	EB 07	JMP SHORT 778DF16A
778DF165	40	INC EAX	778DF163	33C8	XOR EAX, EAX

Figure 12.0 Before and after patching the DbgUiRemoteBreakin function

GuLoader will create a folder in the C:\Users directory and the created folder contains a copy of the malware itself. It will also achieve persistence by modifying the registry key HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\RunOnce

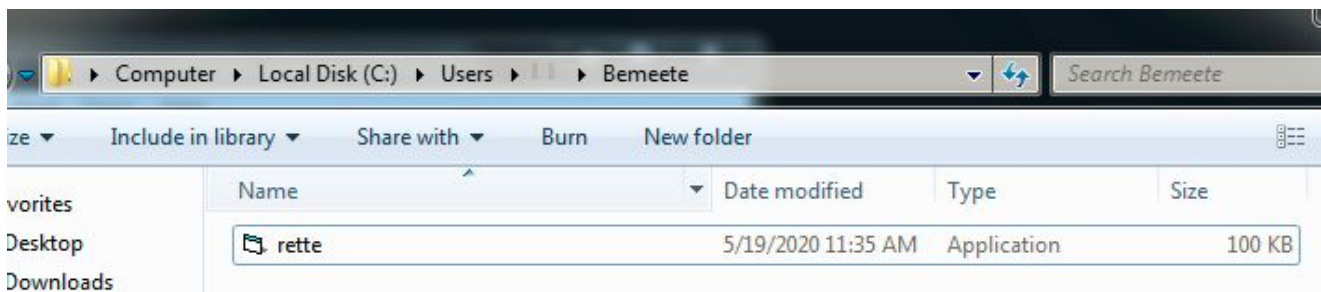


Figure 13.0 The created folder containing the created malware copy



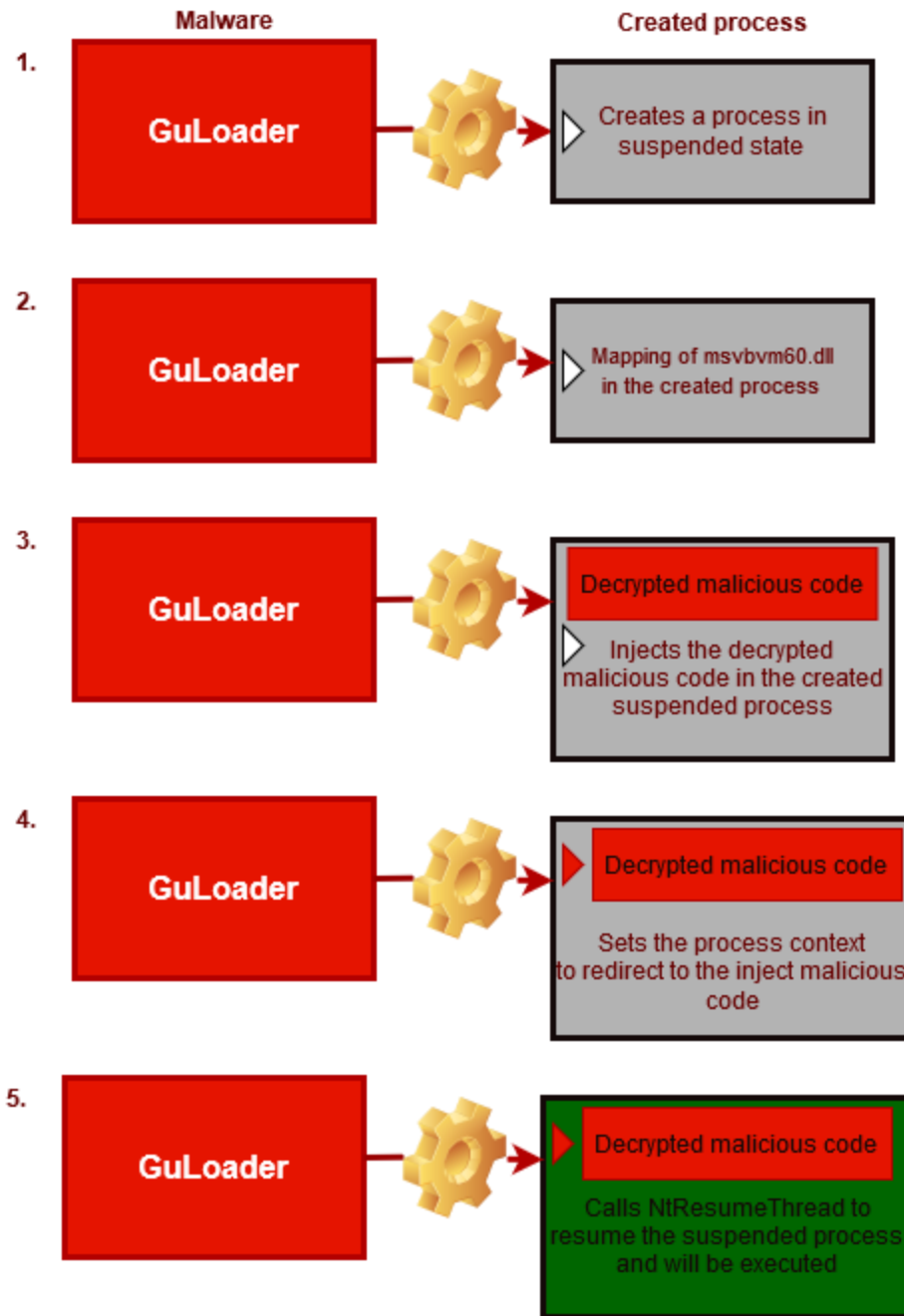
Autorun Entry	Description	Publisher	Image Path
 HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\RunOnce			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  STRM	hemipa	WONderware	c:\users\tst\bemeete\rette.exe

Figure 14.0 Achieving malware persistence

Now GuLoader implements process hollowing:



The child process (for this sample it's *RegAsm.exe*) downloads and decrypts the encrypted payload from a cloud hosting service, and maps the decrypted payload into memory to execute.

Top of stack [0012FA60]=003519BE, ASCII "https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=19sUk-ZTWHU13_ITBst1x51qX2L28yNlw"
 Stack [0012FB1C]=005F7AB8

Address	Hex dump	ASCII
003519BE	68 74 74 70 73 3a 2f 2f 64 72 69 76 65 2e 67 6f	https://drive.go
003519CE	6f 67 6c 65 2e 63 6f 6d 2f 75 63 3f 65 78 70 6f	ogle.com/uc?expo
003519DE	72 74 3d 64 6f 77 6e 6c 6f 61 64 26 69 64 3d 31	rt=download&id=1
003519EE	39 73 56 6b 2d 5a 54 57 48 56 6c 33 5f 49 54 42	9sUk-ZTWHU13_ITB
003519FE	73 74 31 78 35 31 71 58 32 4c 32 38 79 4e 6c 77	st1x51qX2L28yNlw
00351A0E	00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 M

Figure 10.0 The cloud hosting service storing the encrypted payload

The common GuLoader payloads are Formbook, NetWire, Remcos, Lokibot etc.

IOCs:

URLs

- `hxxps://onedrive[.]live[.]com/download?cid=1491235303209D1A&resid=1491235303209D1A!109&authkey=ACw2GiM8jfgliBs`
- `hxxps://drive[.]google[.]com/uc?export=download&id=1EQ7DIIAk9Ik2E52DQLELmB02ADqw-62s`
- `hxxps://drive[.]google[.]com/uc?export=download&id=19sVk-ZTWHVI3_ITBst1x51qX2L28yNIw`

Samples

- IMG and ISO Files
 - `466a8de97917fdbbc706ccad735ef08a4b049f802d01a03e4f611f75a132e4839`
 - `7aadacc7c5bb0c0319f8943d3c65ef2d41d49b1c470210e70e250dd665f167fe`
- EXE Files
 - `503f94f00304bc18900c3494f2da5bcb1d8a103a0b15ce00bbdaeb5dfd8d9b7b`
 - `cbffd8f471de9728610b1ed4519f65399a8e64e46177e1178685ef6b081065b`

VIPRE detects and prevents this kind of malware and associated infections.

Analysis by #Farrallel