

A Storm is Brewing: IPStorm Now Has Linux Malware

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Introduction

The development of cross-platform malware is not new, however, we continue to observe a number of malware that were previously documented only targeting Windows now targeting the Linux platform. One of these threats is IPStorm.

In May 2019, researchers from Anomali discovered a new Golang malware targeting Windows, which they dubbed **IPStorm** (InterPlanetary Storm). IPStorm is a botnet that abuses a legitimate Peer-to-peer (p2p) network called InterPlanetary File System (IPFS) as a means to obscure malicious traffic. It was found the malware eventually allowed attackers to execute arbitrary PowerShell commands on the victim's Windows machine.

Our research team recently identified new Linux variants of IPStorm targeting various Linux architectures (ARM, AMD64, Intel 80386) and platforms (servers, Android, IoT). We have also detected a macOS variant. The macOS variant and most of the Linux samples are fully undetected in VirusTotal at the time of this publication. IPStorm is written in Golang, which enabled Intezer Analyze to detect cross-platform code connections between the Linux samples and the Windows malware first reported by Anomali.

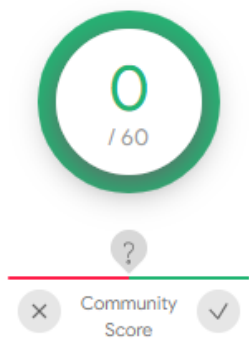
The Linux variant has additional features over the documented Windows version, such as using **SSH brute-force** as a means to spread to additional victims and **fraudulent network activity** abusing Steam gaming and advertising platforms. The Linux variant has adjusted some features in order to account for the fundamental differences that exist between this operating system and Windows.

In this post, we will present a code relations graph between the IPStorm Windows and Linux samples, analyze one of the Linux variant's behavior, and compare its features and capabilities to the old Windows samples to track its evolution. Following we will take a deeper dive into some notable features and explain how to respond to this threat.

Technical Analysis

Most of the IPStorm Linux samples were fully undetected before we submitted them for genetic analysis in Intezer Analyze.

In this post, we will focus on the **658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117** Linux sample.



✓ No engines detected this file

658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117
 116.49.132.142:47178.storm_linux-386.bin

elf

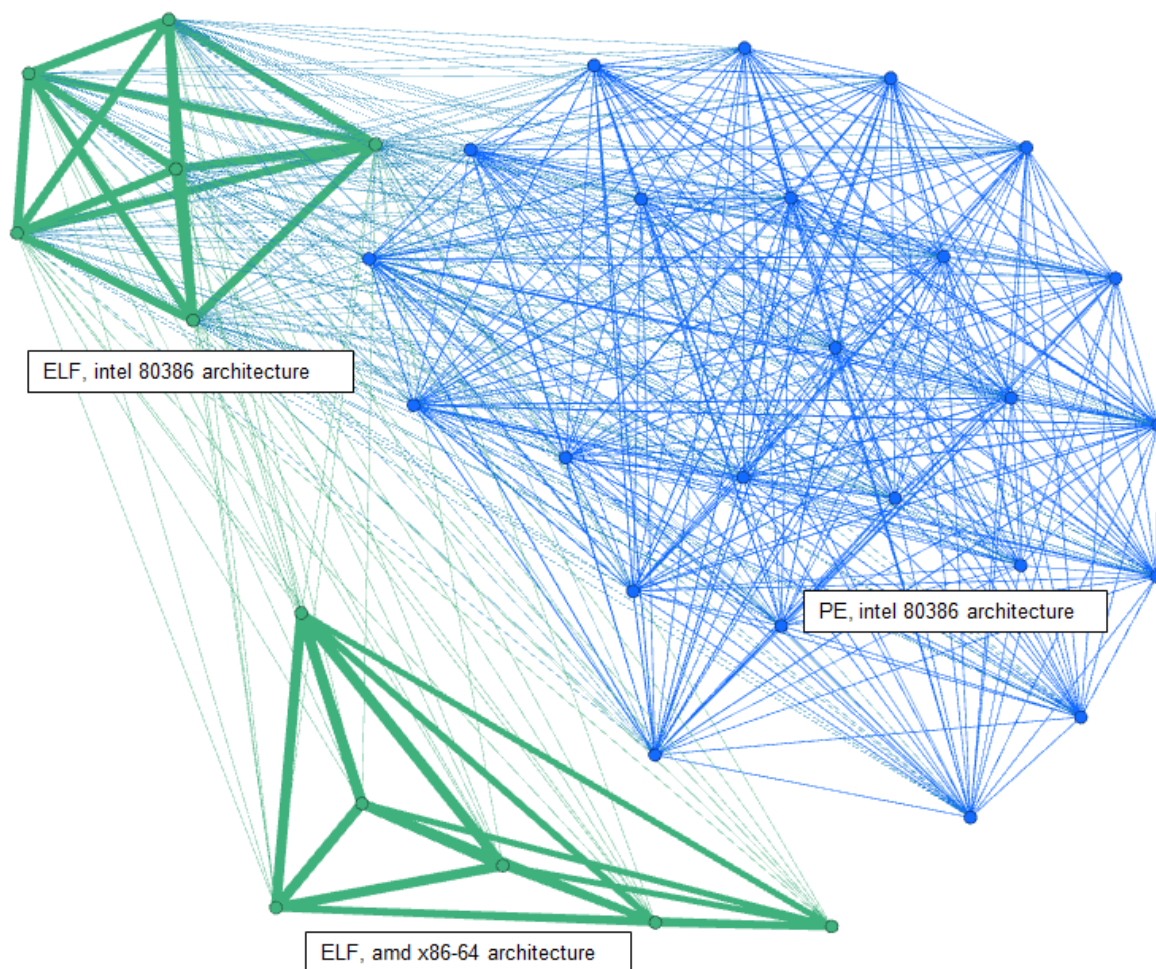
658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117 sample undetected in VirusTotal.

Because IPStorm is written in Golang, not only can we observe strong code connections between the different Linux variants, we can also identify connections to IPStorm’s Windows samples uploaded to our system in 2019.



The following map emphasizes code similarities between the different versions and operating systems. The nodes represent the individual samples and the lines are the code relations between them. All samples are linked to each other in some way:

- IPStorm PE files from 2019
- IPStorm ELF files from 2020



The graph depicts three main clusters, with each cluster containing samples that have strong code connections between them:

- PE, intel 80386 architecture
- ELF, intel 80386 architecture
- ELF, amd x86-64 architecture

You will also notice shared code exists between the ELF clusters and the ELF and PE intel 80386 architecture clusters.

You can use the **cluster_directory.py** API script in this [GitHub](#) repository to create a cluster graph of your own.

Linux Variant Behavior Flow

The Linux variant symbols are stripped. Using the plugin [IDAGolangHelper](#) we retrieved the file's symbols and saw exactly which packages the malware contains. A package in Go is a bundle of Go source files which make up a specific functionality. Every Go source file belongs to a package.

The Linux malware's main logic is implemented in a package called **storm_starter**, a new package that was not in the Windows version. All logic was implemented via the main function in the Windows version.

Both versions have similarities in the way the main flow is implemented, however, the Linux instances have additional features and adjusted some logic due to the differences that exist between the two operating systems.

The Linux iteration starts by disabling the out-of-memory (OOM) killer in order to prevent it from terminating the malware. It then proceeds to check for any processes related to Antiviruses or other security tools that may prevent further execution of the malware. Next the malware generates and saves pubkeys in a file called **storm.key**. The location of where this key is saved is based on privileges that the malware was executed with. If the malware was executed with root privileges, the key will be stored at **/etc/storm.key**. Otherwise, it will be saved at **/tmp/storm.key**. The malware then tries to establish connections with other nodes in the peer to peer network.

The malware sends HTTP requests to different services such as **diagnostic[.]opendns[.]com/myip**, **ifconfig[.]io/ip**, and **myip[.]dnsomatic[.]com** to receive the external IP address of the victim server. If the malware is running as root, it will create a service under systemd to achieve persistence and copy itself to **/usr/bin/storm**. Otherwise, it will be copied to **/tmp/storm**. The malware will then relaunch itself from the new installation path.

This new process is responsible for executing the main features of the IPStorm malware, including reverse shell, which was previously seen in the Windows variant—maintaining connection with other peers in the P2P network and a new feature for spreading the malware to other victims.

```
06:26:42 INFO node Disabling OOM killer for pid 6821 os.go:64
06:26:42 ERROR node write /proc/6821/oom_adj: permission denied os.go:72
06:26:47 INFO storm Starting storm v0.2.05a linux-386 (/home/paul/658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117) starter.go:146
06:26:47 INFO malware-guard malware_guard.CloseVulnerabilities not implemented on platform linux-386 firewall.go:8
06:26:47 INFO identity Trusted pubkeys initialized identity.go:23
06:26:48 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:26:48 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:26:48 INFO node node Qm5S2FvchS1wzM3eYpFh1Htre5VEyrmty9dLunf0DnVz9F addr: [/ip4/127.0.0.1/tcp/45111 /ip4/192.168.1.31/tcp/45111] node.go:171
06:26:50 INFO node Connection established with bootstrap peer: /ip4/104.131.131.82/tcp/4001/p2p/QnacpDMGvV2BGHeYERUEnRQAwe3N8SzbUufsmvsgQLuvuJ bootstrap.go:
06:26:51 INFO node Connection established with bootstrap peer: /ip4/147.75.83.83/tcp/4001/p2p/QmBLHANMoJPM5SCR5Zhtx6BHJX9K1KNN6tpvbuqanJ75Nb bootstrap.go:49
06:26:52 INFO node Connection established with bootstrap peer: /ip4/147.75.109.213/tcp/4001/p2p/QmNnooDu7bfjPFoTZYxMNLWUQJyrWtzbZg5BhJTeZGAJN bootstrap.go:
06:26:52 INFO node Connection established with bootstrap peer: /ip4/147.75.94.115/tcp/4001/p2p/QmcZF59bMwK5XF176CZ8cbJ4BhtZzA3gU1ZjYzCVW3dwt bootstrap.go:4
06:26:52 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:26:52 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:26:57 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:26:57 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:27:02 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:27:02 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:27:07 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:27:07 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:27:12 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:27:12 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:27:17 INFO malware-guard Killing 733:/usr/bin/python3: /usr/bin/python3 /usr/bin/networkd-dispatcher --run-startup-triggers malware-guard.go:37
06:27:17 INFO malware-guard Killing 772:polkitd: /usr/lib/policykit-1/polkitd --no-debug malware-guard.go:37
06:27:18 INFO node advertising fmi4kYtP9789G3sCRqMZVG7D3uKalwtCuWw1j8LSPHQEGVbUShfbNdnHvt3kyr1FVULGNA0zaactnIMiZods0h9tfnf25Xef1 discovery.go:184
06:27:18 INFO filetransfer HTTP server listening on [::]:41951 http-server.go:74
06:27:21 INFO filetransfer Serving file storm_linux-386 (7555610 bytes) with sha256 134e53d82a09ba671b7314f68b5d489ff1c572fcc7b155224b6e84c19eaf2d9f
server.go:159
06:27:21 WARNING filetransfer remove /tmp/storm: no such file or directory persistence_unix.go:42
06:27:21 INFO node advertising sfadv:134e53d82a09ba671b7314f68b5d489ff1c572fcc7b155224b6e84c19eaf2d9f discovery.go:104
06:27:21 ERROR filetransfer You must have root user privileges. Possibly using 'sudo' command should help persistence_unix.go:105
06:27:21 INFO filetransfer Service remove status: Removing storm: [FAILED] persistence_unix.go:107
06:27:21 ERROR filetransfer You must have root user privileges. Possibly using 'sudo' command should help persistence_unix.go:111
06:27:21 INFO filetransfer Service install status: Install storm: [FAILED] persistence_unix.go:113
06:27:21 ERROR filetransfer You must have root user privileges. Possibly using 'sudo' command should help persistence_unix.go:117
06:27:21 INFO filetransfer Service start status: Starting storm: [FAILED] persistence_unix.go:119
06:27:21 INFO filetransfer Started storm in another process: 14659 persistence_unix.go:88
```

IPStorm Linux output non-privileged user.

Linux vs. Windows Comparison

Comparing IPStorm **Linux version 0.2.05a** to **Windows version 0.0.2m**, it became clear the developer added features and altered existing ones to attack Linux platforms.

Packages Comparison

The malware is composed of different Golang packages with each package providing a different feature. The following table categorizes package comparisons between the two versions:

Golang Package	Functionality	Linux Version 0.2.05a (2020)	Windows Version 0.0.2m (2019)
scan_tools	Scans for potential victims	+	-
web_api_client	Handles HTTP requests and responses	+	-
p2p (part of the web API)	HTTP over P2P	+	-
reque_client	Handles the communication of peers in the network	+	-
commander	Handles HTTP requests	+	-
starter	Implements the main logic of the malware (basically the “main function”)	+	-
malware-guard	Antivirus evasion	+	-
avbypass	Antivirus evasion	-	+
backshell	In charge of the reverse shell	+	+
ddb	Database	+	+
filetransfer	Persistence and managing file transferring to other peers	+	+
logging	Output log	+	+
node	Responsible for advertising the node, getting the external IP, and maintaining connection with other nodes.	+	+

powershell	In Windows, in charge of the powershell artifact in the backdoor. In the Linux variant, the package has only one function copied from the Windows version and is used for achieving reverse shell.	+	
util	Utility functions	+	+
ddbinterface	DB functions	+	+
proxy	Implements Socks5 Proxy	+	+

Note: We compared **Linux version 0.2.05a** to **Windows version 0.0.2m** which was analyzed in Anomali’s report. However, the malware is frequently being updated and we have observed multiple different versions since, so functionalities may differ between them.

Features Comparison

Scanning tools – Android and SSH brute-force

The Linux variant attempts to spread and infect other victims on the internet by using SSH brute-force. Once a connection is established, the malware will check if the victim server is a honeypot by comparing the hostname of the attacked server to the string “svr04”, which is the default hostname of Cowrie SSH honeypot. If the malware identifies a honeypot it will close the connection, otherwise it will proceed to download the payload and infect the server.

```

.text:0865EC47 mov     [esp+90h+var_68], 0
.text:0865EC4F mov     [esp+90h+var_64], 0
.text:0865EC57 mov     [esp+90h+var_60], 0
.text:0865EC5F call    regex_ptr_Regexp_doExecute ; regex_ptr_Regexp_doExecute
.text:0865EC64 mov     eax, [esp+90h+var_5C]
.text:0865EC68 test    eax, eax
.text:0865EC6A jz     loc_865ED62

0 mov     eax, [esp+90h+var_38] ; ----- INTEZER -----
0 ; Malware - IPStorm
0 ; -----
4 mov     ecx, [eax+4]
7 mov     eax, [eax]
9 mov     [esp+90h+var_90], eax
C mov     [esp+90h+var_8C], ecx
0 call    runtime_convTstring
5 mov     eax, [esp+90h+var_88]
9 mov     [esp+90h+var_10], 0
4 mov     [esp+90h+var_C], 0
F lea    ecx, string_autogen_AR6CCO
5 mov     [esp+90h+var_10], ecx
C mov     [esp+90h+var_C], eax
3 lea    eax, honeypot_detected
9 mov     [esp+90h+var_90], eax

.text:0865ED62 loc_865ED62: ; ----- INTEZER -----
.text:0865ED62 mov     eax, [esp+90h+arg_0] ; Malware - IPStorm
.text:0865ED62 ; -----
.text:0865ED69 mov     [esp+90h+var_90], eax
.text:0865ED6C mov     eax, [esp+90h+var_38]
.text:0865ED70 mov     [esp+90h+var_8C], eax
.text:0865ED74 call    storm_scan_tools_ssh_InstallPayload
.text:0865ED79 mov     eax, [esp+90h+var_84]
.text:0865ED7D mov     ecx, [esp+90h+var_88]
.text:0865ED81 test    ecx, ecx
.text:0865ED83 jz     short loc_865EDF9

```

Validation of whether the server is a honeypot or not.

Another spreading method that is unique to the Linux version is searching for potential Android victims. The malware checks for devices connected with ADB (Android Debug Bridge) to the victim node. Once identified, it will upload an Android version of IPStorm to the device, which was previously downloaded from the P2P network.

```
ubuntu storm[3509]: 06:40:04 INFO filetransfer File storm_android-arm7 downloaded [2ad0818d6276bbbd5b9b55e2dac20ad816d2a6faee64e11a2cce1a6412c6e436] download.go:150
ubuntu storm[3509]: 06:40:04 INFO filetransfer Serving file storm_android-arm7 (6947178 bytes) with sha256 2ad0818d6276bbbd5b9b55e2dac20ad816d2a6faee64e11a2cce1a6412c6e436
ubuntu storm[3509]: server.go:159
ubuntu storm[3509]: 06:40:04 INFO node advertising stfadv:2ad0818d6276bbbd5b9b55e2dac20ad816d2a6faee64e11a2cce1a6412c6e436 discovery.go:104
```

Screen capture from the log of the storm service showing the downloaded file.

Antivirus Evasion

Both IPStorm Windows and Linux versions implement features related to detection evasion and each variant uses a different technique. In the Linux version, the package in charge of this logic is called **storm_malware_guard**. The file iterates through all current running processes in order to find and terminate ones that might detect the malware's activity.

The function under the **storm_malware_guard** package that implements this technique is called **KillSuspiciousProcesses**. Other functions in this package are responsible for obtaining information about the CPU and memory usage, number of I/O ports, and functions that return information about processes and threads.

In the Windows version, the AV evasion logic is implemented in a package called **avbypass**.

This technique is based on random sleep times and multiple function calls. The purpose of this method is to make tracing the original process harder for Antivirus solutions.

It appears that due to the different operating systems, each IPStorm version has its own way to evade detection.

Reverse Shell

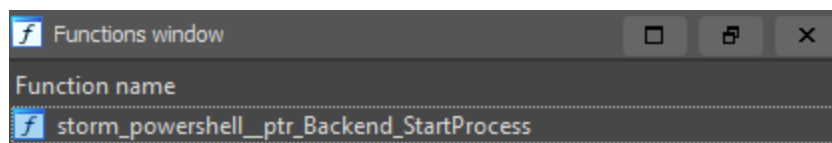
Both IPStorm versions use the name backshell to refer to the feature of reverse shell.

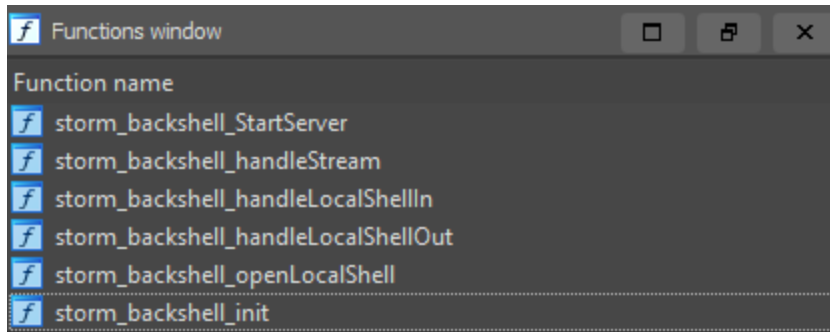
The backshell functions of the Linux variant are identical to those of the Windows variant.

The Windows variant has a package called **powershell** which contains functions for achieving reverse shell. The same package is present in the Linux variant but it contains only one function: **storm_powershell_ptr_Backend_StartProcess**. The function is used to get a reverse shell on the infected system.

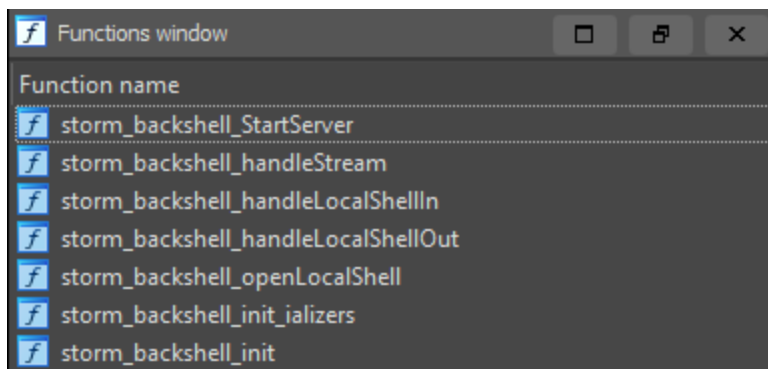
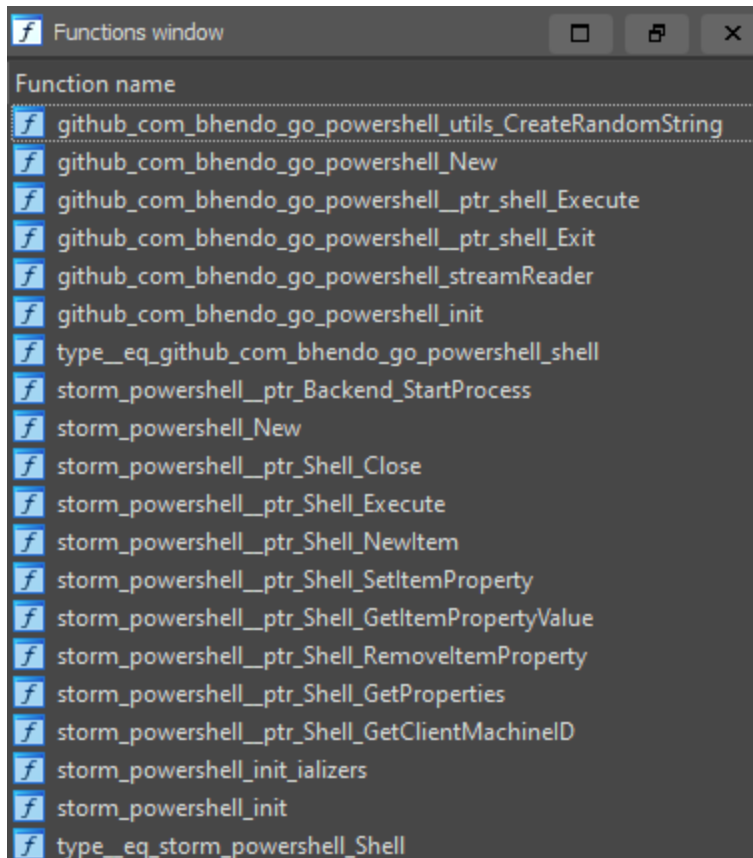
The implementation of the reverse shell is a clear example of the code reuse connections between the two IPStorm variants. The screengrabs below demonstrate changes in the file names and the identical function names found in the two versions:

Linux:





Windows:



Persistence

The Linux version will attempt to gain persistence only if it was executed with root privileges. The Windows version, on the other hand, will always look to gain persistence. It

is evident that each variant of the malware, Linux and Windows, uses a different technique to gain persistence since the operating systems they target are fundamentally different.

The Windows variant achieves persistence by copying itself to a random location and adding the program to the:

HKCU:SoftwareMicrosoftWindowsCurrentVersionRun registry key.

The Linux version achieves persistence by creating a **systemd** service under `/etc/systemd/system/storm.service`.

```
[Unit]
Description=storm
Requires=
After=

[Service]
PIDFile=/var/run/storm.pid
ExecStartPre=/bin/rm -f /var/run/storm.pid
ExecStart=/usr/bin/storm
Restart=on-failure

[Install]
WantedBy=multi-user.target
```

`/etc/systemd/system/storm.service`

```
text:08469240
text:08469240
text:08469240 ; storm_filetransfer_ptr_File_Persist
text:08469240 storm_filetransfer_ptr_File_Persist proc near
text:08469240
text:08469240 var_84= dword ptr -84h
text:08469240 var_80= dword ptr -80h
text:08469240 var_7C= dword ptr -7Ch
text:08469240 var_78= dword ptr -78h
text:08469240 var_74= dword ptr -74h
```

The function that archives persistence in the Linux variant.

Another difference is the location to which the file is copied. The Windows variant uses random file paths while the Linux version uses fixed paths.

Network Traffic

On top of creating a reverse shell, we have detected that IPStorm's Linux variant takes advantage of its being widespread to perform different fraudulent activity in the background,

abusing gaming and ads monetization. Because it's a botnet, the malware utilizes the large amount of requests from different trusted sources, thus not being blocked nor traceable. This activity was not observed in the Windows variant.

Steam Gaming Fraud

Steam is a popular gaming service from Valve Corporation and is used by hundreds of millions users worldwide. It also provides an API for developers who want to use Steam data on their own websites.

As part of the monetization process for game developers, Steam users can buy and sell different items such as equipment, skins, and other in-game elements. This platform is so popular that it has become a hot target for cybercriminals. A known method used by attackers is creating phishing websites to lure users to submit their Steam login credentials. With access to a user's credentials the attacker has full access to the the account, API key included.

We noticed IPStorm generates a large amount of traffic to Steam's API, querying data pertaining to various Steam users and using multiple valid API keys.

```
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /IPlayerService/GetSteamLevel/v1/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /IPlayerService/GetCommunityBadgeProgress/v1/?
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /IPlayerService/GetCommunityBadgeProgress/v1/?
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /IPlayerService/GetCommunityBadgeProgress/v1/?
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
GET /ISteamUser/GetPlayerSummaries/v2/?key=[REDACTED]
HTTP/1.1 200 OK (application/json)
```

We suspect these are stolen accounts that are being monitored as part of a fake trade scam. [Browse here](#) for more information about this scam.

Ad Fraud

The malware generates requests which imitate fake advertisements clicks. All the ads we have traced are related to pornographic websites. The malware crawls through different predefined sites, searches for advertisement iframes, and imitates a user “click” by

browsing through the iframes.

```
GET /ads-iframe-display.php?
idzone=2898530&type=300x250&p=1&dt=1600942146388&sub=&tags=&screen_resolutio
n=1280x1024&el=%22 HTTP/1.1
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
Referer: http://a.xxe2.com/api/spots/41050?p=1
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 10.0; WOW64) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML,
like Gecko) Chrome/56.0.2924.87 Safari/537.36
Cookie:
impressions=x%9C%ABV210%B6042%D25165%B1%B00%B5P%B2%8A6%D41430%B041201%D1Q241
1P%8A%AD%05%00%BF%CD%09%01;
tag=v3%7C52.232.68.130%7CNLD%7C3981550%7C43548858%7C0%7C%7C508%7C41%7C2%7C40
%7C0%7C0%7C0%7C346%7C2749879%7C2759794%7C0%7C0%7C2%7C2%7C0%7C0%7C1%7C0%7C0%7
C1%7C%7C%7C0%7Citalian-porn.net%7C%7C%7C0%7C0%7C0%7C56%7C0%7C0%7Cok; exo-
splash-i=0;
__uvt=a%3A1%3A%7Bi%3A0%3Bs%3A33%3A%225f6c6fdc0d47b5.489690013603344063%22%3B
%7D
Connection: Keep-Alive
Accept-Encoding: gzip
Accept-Language: en-US,*
Host: syndication.realsrv.com
```

Example of a request the malware generates to an ad platform.

Protocol	Length	Info
DNS	83	Standard query 0x4588 AAAA promo-bc.com OPT
DNS	83	Standard query 0x82eb A promo-bc.com OPT
DNS	164	Standard query response 0xa73e AAAA www.wetclassicporn.com SOA ns1.wetclassicporn.com OPT
DNS	129	Standard query response 0x6dab A www.wetclassicporn.com A 109.206.164.168 OPT
DNS	160	Standard query response 0x4588 AAAA promo-bc.com SOA ns1.gnsbc.com OPT
DNS	119	Standard query response 0x82eb A promo-bc.com A 185.75.253.87 OPT
DNS	90	Standard query 0x2c4d AAAA www.vintagewiki.com OPT
DNS	90	Standard query 0xbce8 A www.vintagewiki.com OPT
DNS	86	Standard query 0x3f64 AAAA www.pornhub.com OPT
DNS	86	Standard query 0x531f A www.pornhub.com OPT
DNS	126	Standard query response 0xbce8 A www.vintagewiki.com A 213.174.132.102 OPT
DNS	156	Standard query response 0x2c4d AAAA www.vintagewiki.com SOA ns1.vintagewiki.com OPT
DNS	89	Standard query 0x7dfa AAAA cdn.tsyndicate.com OPT
DNS	89	Standard query 0xeb90 A cdn.tsyndicate.com OPT
DNS	136	Standard query response 0x531f A www.pornhub.com CNAME pornhub.com A 66.254.114.41 OPT

Websites the malware crawls through.

IPStorm Detection and Response

Compromised System Detection

You can take the following steps to check if your system has been attacked by the IPStorm malware.

Check if the process of IPStorm is running on your system.

Run: **ps tree | grep storm**

```
roota@ubuntu:~$ ps tree | grep storm
|-storm---6*[{storm}]
|
|-storm---7*[{storm}]
```

IPStorm will usually run with

multiple threads.

Check the services that run on your system, since if the malware was executed with root privileges it would create a service for persistence.

Run: **sudo systemctl status storm.service**

```
roota@ubuntu:~$ sudo systemctl status storm.service
● storm.service - storm
   Loaded: loaded (/etc/systemd/system/storm.service; enabled; vendor preset: enabled)
   Active: active (running) since Thu 2020-10-01 02:08:38 PDT; 28min ago
   Process: 9369 ExecStartPre=/bin/rm -f /var/run/storm.pid (code=exited, status=0/SUCCESS)
  Main PID: 9370 (storm)
    Tasks: 7 (limit: 1085)
   CGroup: /system.slice/storm.service
           └─9370 /usr/bin/storm
```

Check if IPStorm's files exist in your system.

Run: **sudo find / -name "storm*" -type f**

- o In case of a non-root execution the output will look similar to the screen capture

```
roota@ubuntu:~$ sudo find / -name "storm*" -type f
/tmp/storm
/tmp/storm.key
```

- o If the malware was executed with root privileges, the output will look similar to the screen capture below:

```
roota@ubuntu:~$ sudo find / -name "storm*" -type f
/etc/storm.key
/etc/systemd/system/storm.service
/usr/bin/storm
find: '/run/user/1000/gvfs': Permission denied
```

Check the open ports on your system and the processes that are associated with them. Run: **sudo ss -tulpn**

In the screen capture below a number of processes that belong to the IPStorm malware listen on specific ports.

```
roota@ubuntu:~$ sudo ss -tulpn
NetId State Recv-Q Send-Q Local Address:Port Peer Address:Port users:(("systemd-resolve",pid=624,fd=12))
udp UNCONN 0 0 53Kilobytes 0.0.0.0:* users:(("cups-browsed",pid=3434,fd=7))
udp UNCONN 0 0 0.0.0.0:5353 0.0.0.0:* users:(("avahi-daemon",pid=634,fd=12))
udp UNCONN 0 0 0.0.0.0:40230 0.0.0.0:* users:(("avahi-daemon",pid=634,fd=14))
udp UNCONN 0 0 [::]:44631 [::]:* users:(("avahi-daemon",pid=634,fd=15))
udp UNCONN 0 0 [::]:5353 [::]:* users:(("avahi-daemon",pid=634,fd=13))
tcp LISTEN 0 128 0.0.0.0:43793 0.0.0.0:* users:(("storm",pid=9370,fd=10))
tcp LISTEN 0 128 0.0.0.0:40083 0.0.0.0:* users:(("storm",pid=8539,fd=10))
tcp LISTEN 0 5 127.0.0.1:431 0.0.0.0:* users:(("Cinodes",pid=3432,fd=7))
tcp LISTEN 0 128 *:*:33609 *:* users:(("storm",pid=9370,fd=28))
tcp LISTEN 0 5 [::]:43793 [::]:* users:(("storm",pid=9370,fd=9))
tcp LISTEN 0 128 *:*:44669 *:* users:(("storm",pid=8539,fd=7))
```

Use freely the [Intezer Protect](#) community beta to identify which process is running on your system. The screen capture below is taken from the alert of IPStorm executed on a server. The info provided by the system includes the malware family name, full path of the executable, the process ID, execution time, and a link to Intezer Analyze where you can observe code reuse prevalent in this malware.

The screenshot displays an alert titled "Malicious File" with a severity level of "Severe". The alert message states: "A malicious file has been executed by a process". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Asset Details:** Hostname: ubuntu; Distribution: Ubuntu 18.04.5 LTS; OS Version: Linux #46-18.04.1-Ubuntu SMP Fri Jul 10 07:21:24 UTC 2020; OS Release: 5.4.0-42-generic.
- File Details:** Path: /usr/bin/storm; Execution Time: 30 Sep 20 | 11:24 AM; Assets Found In: 1; First Seen: 15 Sep 20 | 18:02 PM; Size: 15.9 MB; SHA256: 658638c6bef52e03e6aa4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117.
- Intezer Analyze:** Genetic Analysis; Verdict: Malicious; Family: IPStorm.
- All Executions:** A "Running process tree" shows three processes: PID: 1 | /lib/systemd/systemd (checked), PID: 1841 | /lib/systemd/systemd (checked), and PID: 2738 | /usr/bin/storm (malicious). A detailed view for the malicious execution (PID: 2738) shows: Execution Time: 30 Sep 20 | 11:24 AM; PID: 2738; Path: /usr/bin/storm; Command: /usr/bin/storm; PPID: 2643; UID: 0 (root); GID: 0 (root); TTY: pts/0; Active: Running. A "Terminate Process" button is visible.

How to Terminate IPStorm on a Compromised System

- If the malware runs as a service you should stop the service by executing the command:
sudo systemctl stop storm.service
- Delete all the files that are related to the IPStorm malware. The file paths are mentioned in the previous section.
- Kill the process by running: **sudo kill -9 storm**

Response

We are providing a [YARA rule](#) intended to be run against in-memory artifacts in order to be able to detect these implants.

System Security Hardening

- Make sure your SSH connection is secured. Use a key instead of a password or use multi-factor authentication. [Browse here](#) for more tips about SSH hardening.
- Make sure your system is updated to the latest software and aligned with most recent security best practices.
- Use a runtime cloud workload protection solution such as [Intezer Protect](#). Protect provides full runtime visibility over the code in your system and alerts on any suspicious or unauthorized code that deviates from the secure baseline.

Summary

IPStorm now with Linux malware is the latest example of a cross-platform malware developed in Golang. Platforms that are compromised by IPStorm are not only exposed to a backdoor to their services but are also added to the IPStorm Botnet which attempts to spread to other victims. The attackers behind IPStorm are very active evidenced by the frequent release of updated versions with new features and improvements, as well as the expansion to several different platforms and architectures.

IPStorm is part of a growing list of Golang ELF malware that have been spotted attacking live servers in the past six months alone, together with [Kaiji](#), [Kinsing](#), and [FritzFrog](#).

We want to give a special thanks to Paul Litvak and Michael Kajiloti for their help contributing to this analysis.

Both IPStorm Linux and Windows samples are indexed in Intezer Analyze and you can detect this and other cross-platform malware with the code reuse feature for Golang, just by uploading a file or hash to the system. Below is the analysis of one of the Linux samples.

658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117

Malicious
Family: IPStorm

Known Malicious
This file is a known malware and exists in Intezer's blacklist or is recognized by trusted security vendors

elf intel 80386 golang statically_linked

SHA256:
658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117

virusotal
Report (0 / 60 Detections)

Code Reuse (6,513 Genes)

IPStorm Edit
Malware 4,929 Genes | 75.68%

Subscribe to our [weekly threat feed](#) to receive the latest low-detected Linux threat hashes.

IOCs

Linux

3aff4695c73709e2e0e55665c4850aa45064723a2c83e75325b27e77ec5f6d97

b80346c4d31d77fba9427024d34af2f43e64a5272b5bbef28c6bf045a06143ff

d233c37f2d49badbf53d054bce7fb8e787c9973067e8dcd79835d7816aacfa43

658638c6bef52e03e6aea4b6c1b2b3b8d81ad40144b56b2122d96e6957c33117

bfb69eadee1918a9402478c76dd15696bbac3e3e3e57c9a94c7d51e594b8c657

64abc2cf5866e932b0731a6deb487aa3d9756724250de26bac2fb930cd478dc0
52f215521ba59cb6a51314bd1527f1c540ffc04df924ad971ca2160405879778
aa7639b11f7c852005110e5ac34c9a2c94c562bcc95dbf6f60a1a7192cf8ea77
cae8a782765dd0f97e7a812a245cc5b94b3179ced9c8181d0fda13978c9f17be
5103133574615fb49f6a94607540644689be017740d17005bc08b26be9485aa7
08bf31862577567a56bf3be6425f1ddf4ac90914efd883a75a5a53dbcabd28a2
984c5e980fb8a5b7bbc673f923f22ddf06c5dd89fcd0acf774d79d4d193b44c8
591770835066958e912ceb445bd865e961ac946e8cf70ced9f0bd75c851d9478
69ea7bcf3da16d968e6104745c1f015f6371c093188f1061a311a6385985b45b
fbd5e48ee691df949e0dd3687755c80cc5b9d1a1a89e7dc486694370697de893
c247b3c07b4bf13da67c51d5834193d128c45c7e41214096090b5d2610313783
f4f1fb65df80666fe67b22b84d9d8f967449d1249c33ad97f4305784fa41e747
ef226de8cc53e59c9431838085f3bbd1b8a32f7cc135682033a3fdb19a0ee97
dfeecdd23f28f80e42e58c87c9a4858648964b3100dfb899c61b54aed7856cf7
db9c95bdc4247ff6cdfa8a8e47b4add21a730461d8f6e2693136aecdd346b3fb5
b4c75e1d94bc4c8affd6d9f433585ace2738772e6a04403ab67cce3df9574068
b07c2dfb4c57175446b6188bb4b1722272f63a301f18c5f46ee6401347894fea
a5468b6130d90bc74cf8e458297f6d4c7fc42b87184623aefd535bca658542ed
7c41de95313dc98a3fc4f6fe3910759c3561743dacc629dab11e754290f8c7aa
7b044b8eddd20d8e1c7d499a6c34b1bc373f5fe9d59bab7b4e3a341a5f4ce0b5
79ec318a968679f94d2ab0ba15daaeeb71406d2f744eb0cd1b314c4bb403114d
52b081dbaafbae8ad812f9c50a1a5f7d8b0850b3c6dc69eccb3322f34286c2e
50406ec7fa22c78e9b14da4ccc127a899db21f7a23b1916ba432900716e0db3d
1d0e003ee653d1a7b80ff5e69c33689af04e45fc836a29e0853219dd100fd534
16bcb323bfb464f7b1fcfb7530ecb06948305d8de658868d9c3c3c31f63146d4

macOS

522a5015d4d11833ead6d88d4405c0f4119ff29b1f64b226c464e958f03e1434



Nicole Fishbein

Nicole is a malware analyst and reverse engineer. Prior to Intezer she was an embedded researcher in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Intelligence Corps.



Avigayil Mechtinger

Avigayil is a product manager at Intezer, leading Intezer Analyze product lifecycle. Prior to this role, Avigayil was part of Intezer's research team and specialized in malware analysis and threat hunting. During her time at Intezer, she has uncovered and documented different malware targeting both Linux and Windows platforms.