

# A Deep Dive Into ALPHV/BlackCat Ransomware - SecurityScorecard

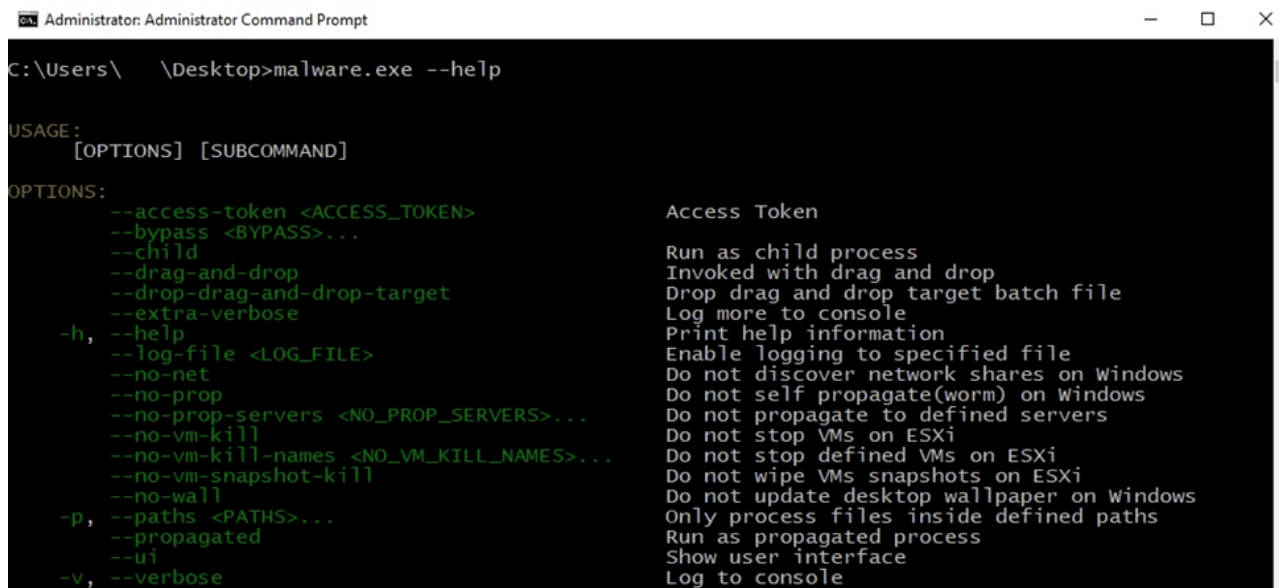
Archived: 2026-04-05 14:57:49 UTC

## Executive summary

ALPHV/BlackCat is the first widely known ransomware written in Rust. The [malware](#) must run with an access token consisting of a 32-byte value (`--access-token` parameter), and other parameters can be specified. The ransomware comes with an encrypted configuration that contains a list of services/processes to be stopped, a list of whitelisted directories/files/file extensions, and a list of stolen credentials from the victim environment. It deletes all Volume Shadow Copies, performs privilege escalation using the CMSTPLUA COM interface, and enables “remote to local” and “remote to remote” symbolic links on the victim’s machine. The files are encrypted using the AES algorithm, with the AES key being encrypted using the RSA public key contained in the configuration. The extension of the encrypted files is changed to `uhwuvzu` by the malware.

## Analysis and findings

SHA256: 847fb7609f53ed334d5affbb07256c21cb5e6f68b1cc14004f5502d714d2a456 The malware can run with one of the following parameters:

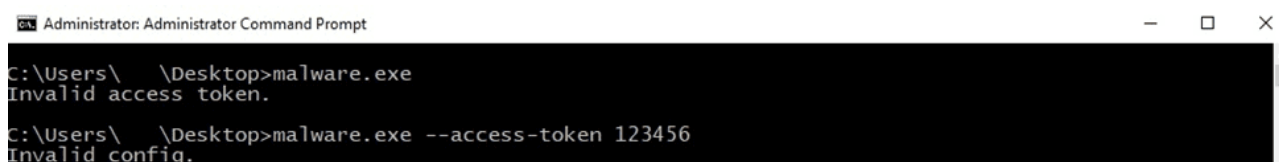


```
Administrator: Administrator Command Prompt
C:\Users\ \Desktop>malware.exe --help

USAGE:
  [OPTIONS] [SUBCOMMAND]

OPTIONS:
  --access-token <ACCESS_TOKEN>      Access Token
  --bypass <BYPASS>...                Run as child process
  --child                               Invoked with drag and drop
  --drag-and-drop                       Drop drag and drop target batch file
  --drop-drag-and-drop-target           Log more to console
  --extra-verbose                       Print help information
  -h, --help                            Enable logging to specified file
  --log-file <LOG_FILE>                Do not discover network shares on Windows
  --no-net                               Do not self propagate(worm) on Windows
  --no-prop                             Do not propagate to defined servers
  --no-prop-servers <NO_PROP_SERVERS>... Do not stop VMs on ESXi
  --no-vm-kill                          Do not stop defined VMs on ESXi
  --no-vm-kill-names <NO_VM_KILL_NAMES>... Do not wipe VMs snapshots on ESXi
  --no-vm-snapshot-kill                 Do not update desktop wallpaper on Windows
  --no-wall                             Only process files inside defined paths
  -p, --paths <PATHS>...                Run as propagated process
  --propagated                          Show user interface
  --ui                                   Log to console
  -v, --verbose
```

Figure 1 Whether the ransomware is running with no parameters or with an invalid access token, an error message is displayed:



```
Administrator: Administrator Command Prompt
C:\Users\ \Desktop>malware.exe
Invalid access token.

C:\Users\ \Desktop>malware.exe --access-token 123456
Invalid config.
```

Figure 2 By performing the dynamic analysis, we’ve found that the access token must be a 32-byte value that is

not unique. The binary registers a new top-level exception handler via a function call to SetUnhandledExceptionFilter:

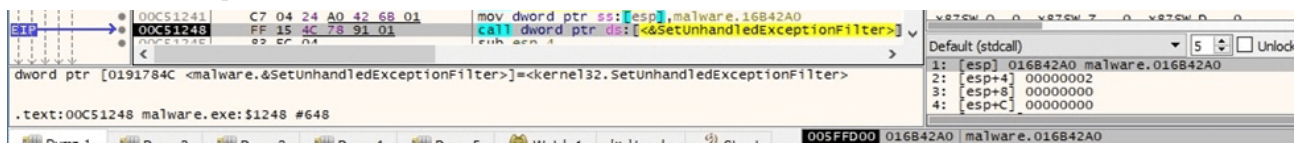


Figure 3 The AddVectoredExceptionHandler API is utilized to register a vectored exception handler:

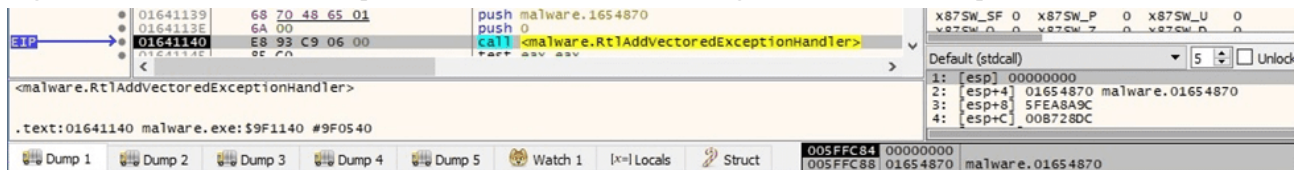


Figure 4 The executable retrieves the command-line string for the process using the GetCommandLineW function:

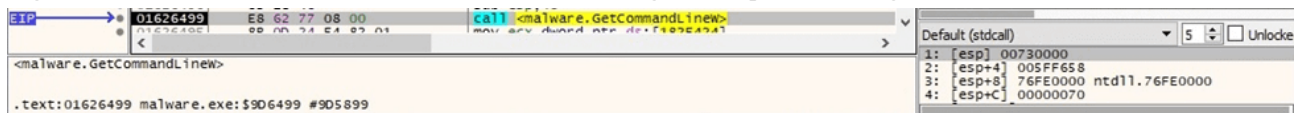


Figure 5 BlackCat opens the “SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Cryptography” registry key by calling the RegOpenKeyExW routine (0x80000002 = HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE, 0x20019 = KEY\_READ):

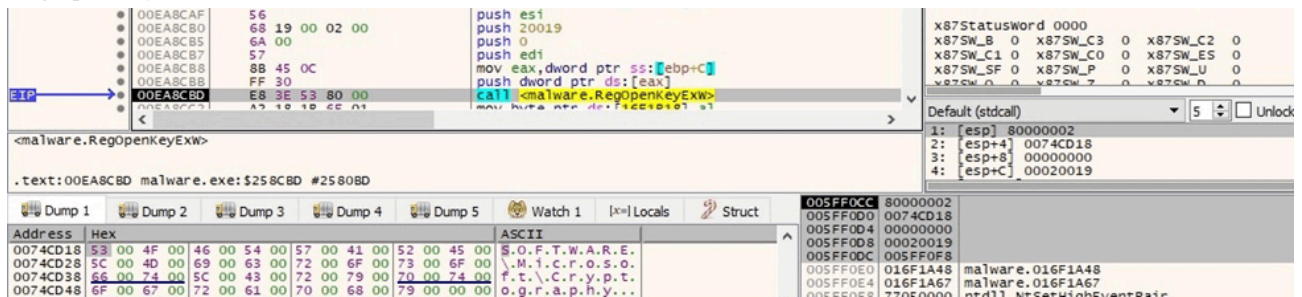


Figure 6 The binary extracts the MachineGUID value from the registry:

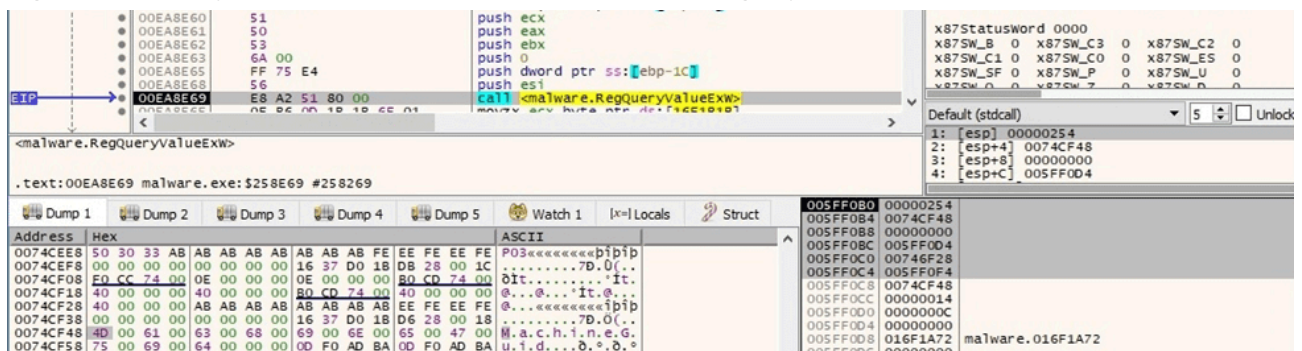


Figure 7 The malicious process searches for cmd.exe in the current directory and then in the System32 directory via a function call to CreateFileW (0x7 = FILE\_SHARE\_DELETE | FILE\_SHARE\_WRITE | FILE\_SHARE\_READ, 0x3 = OPEN\_EXISTING, 0x2000000 = FILE\_FLAG\_BACKUP\_SEMANTICS):

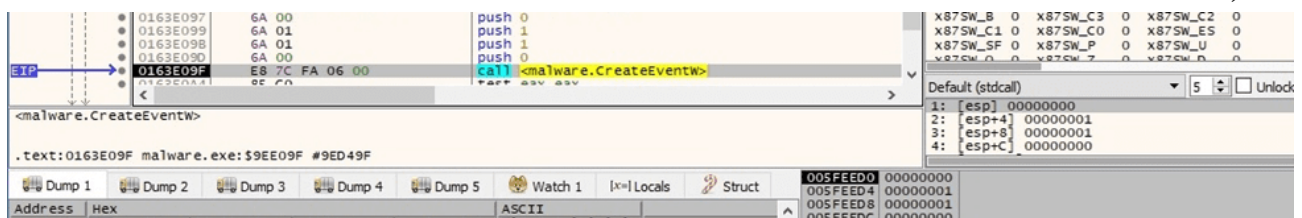


Figure 8 The executable generates 16 random bytes by calling the BCryptGenRandom API (0x2 = BCRYPT\_USE\_SYSTEM\_PREFERRED\_RNG):



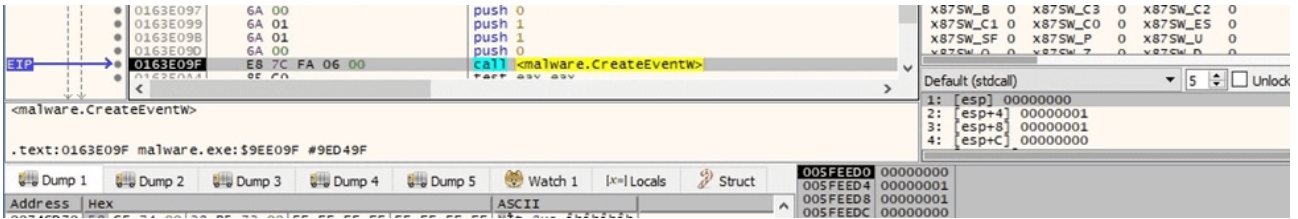


Figure 13 The binary waits until the event objects are in the signaled state by calling WaitForMultipleObjects:

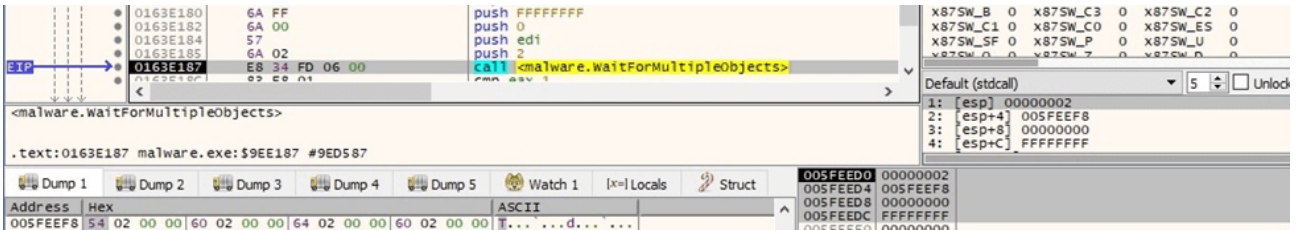


Figure 14 The output of the above process is read from the named pipe using the ReadFile routine:

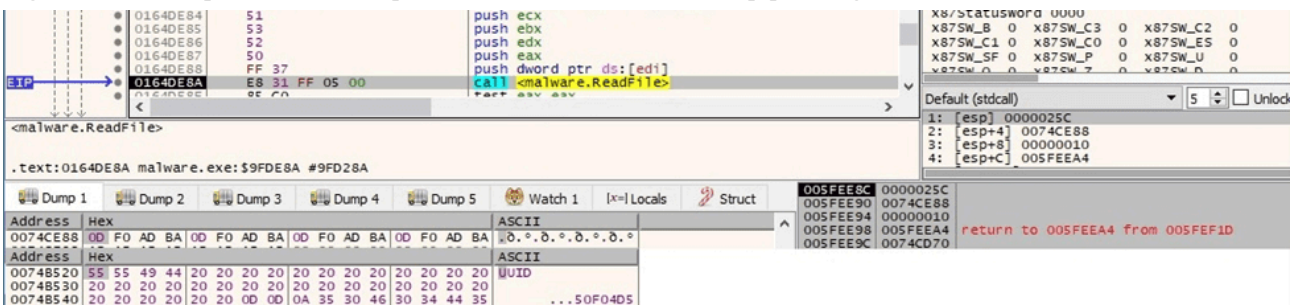


Figure 15 The malware creates multiple threads by calling the CreateThread function (0x00010000 = STACK\_SIZE\_PARAM\_IS\_A\_RESERVATION):

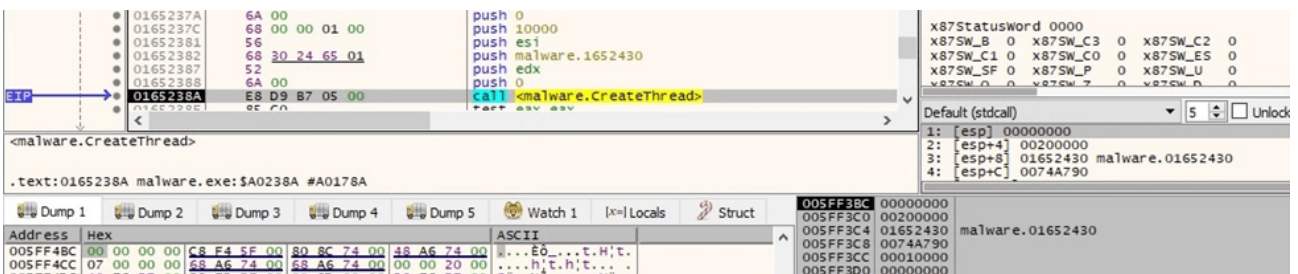


Figure 16 The content of the ransom note and the text that will appear on the Desktop Wallpaper are decrypted by the ransomware:

Address	Hex	ASCII
0074CF48	3E 3E 20 57 68 61 74 20 68 61 70 70 65 6E 65 64	>> what happened
0074CF58	3F 0A 0A 49 6D 70 6F 72 74 61 6E 74 20 66 69 6C	?..Important fil
0074CF68	65 73 20 6F 6E 20 79 6F 75 72 20 6E 65 74 77 6F	es on your netwo
0074CF78	72 68 20 77 61 73 20 45 4E 43 52 59 50 54 45 44	rk was ENCRYPTED
0074CF88	20 61 6E 64 20 6E 6F 77 20 74 68 65 79 20 68 61	and now they ha
0074CF98	76 65 20 22 75 68 77 75 76 7A 75 22 20 65 78 74	ve "uhwuvzu" ext
0074CFA8	65 6E 73 69 6F 6E 2E 0A 49 6E 20 6F 72 64 65 72	ension..In order
0074CFB8	20 74 6F 20 72 65 63 6F 76 65 72 20 79 6F 75 72	to recover your
0074CFC8	20 66 69 6C 65 73 20 79 6F 75 20 6E 65 65 64 20	files you need
0074CFD8	74 6F 20 66 6F 6C 6C 6F 77 20 69 6E 73 74 72 75	to follow instru
0074CFE8	63 74 69 6F 6E 73 20 62 65 6C 6F 77 2E 0A 0A 3E	ctions below...>
0074CFF8	3E 20 53 65 6E 73 69 74 69 76 65 20 44 61 74 61	> sensitive Data
0074D008	0A 0A 53 65 6E 73 69 74 69 76 65 20 64 61 74 61	..Sensitive data
0074D018	20 6F 6E 20 79 6F 75 72 20 6E 65 74 77 6F 72 68	on your network
0074D028	20 77 61 73 20 44 4F 57 4E 4C 4F 41 44 45 44 2E	was DOWNLOADED.
0074D038	0A 49 66 20 79 6F 75 20 44 4F 4E 27 54 20 57 41	.If you DON'T WA
0074D048	4E 54 20 79 6F 75 72 20 73 65 6E 73 69 74 69 76	NT your sensitiv
0074D058	65 20 64 61 74 61 20 74 6F 20 62 65 20 50 55 42	e data to be PUB
0074D068	4C 49 53 48 45 44 20 79 6F 75 20 68 61 76 65 20	LISHED you have

Figure 17

Address	Hex	ASCII
0074AA98	49 6D 70 6F 72 74 61 6E 74 20 66 69 6C 65 73 20	Important files
0074AAA8	6F 6E 20 79 6F 75 72 20 6E 65 74 77 6F 72 68 20	on your network
0074AAB8	77 61 73 20 44 4F 57 4E 4C 4F 41 44 45 44 20 61	was DOWNLOADED a
0074AAC8	6E 64 20 45 4E 43 52 59 50 54 45 44 2E 0A 53 65	nd ENCRYPTED..Se
0074AAD8	65 20 22 52 45 43 4F 56 45 52 20 75 68 77 75 76	e "RECOVER-uhwuv
0074AAE8	7A 75 2D 46 49 4C 45 53 2E 74 78 74 22 20 66 69	zu-FILES.txt" fi
0074AAF8	6C 65 20 74 6F 20 67 65 74 20 66 75 72 74 68 65	le to get furthe
0074AB08	72 20 69 6E 73 74 72 75 63 74 69 6F 6E 73 2E AB	r instructions.«

Figure 18 The malicious binary obtains information about the current system via a function call to GetSystemInfo:

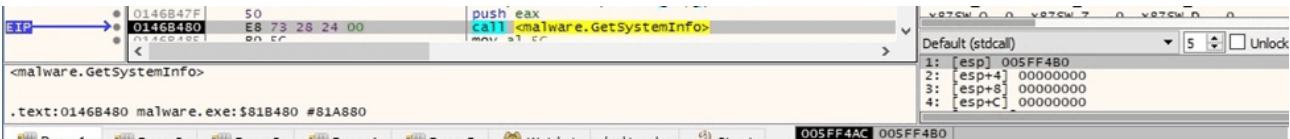


Figure 19 There is a call to SHTestTokenMembership that verifies whether the user token is a member of the Administrators group in the built-in domain (0x220 = DOMAIN\_ALIAS\_RID\_ADMINS):

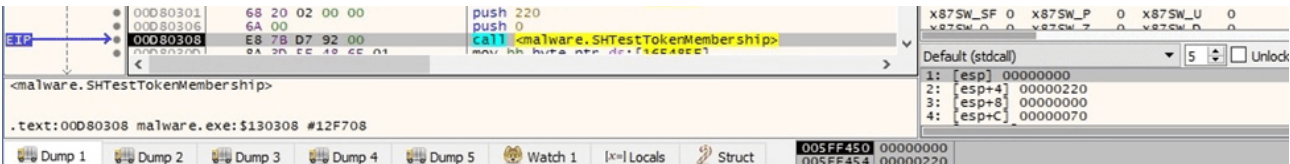


Figure 20 The process opens the access token associated with the current process (0x80000000 = GENERIC\_READ):

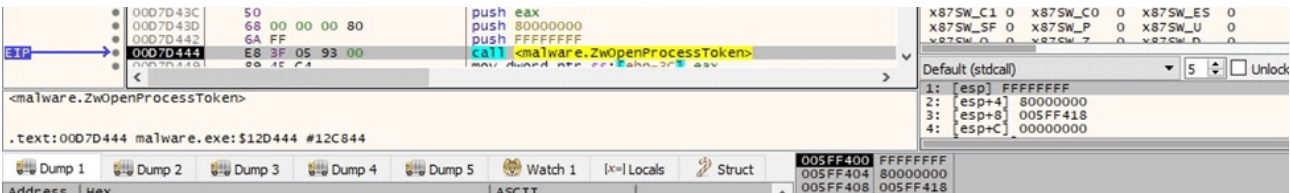


Figure 21 BlackCat extracts a TOKEN\_GROUPS structure containing the group accounts associated with the above token using the NtQueryInformationToken function (0x2 = TokenGroups):

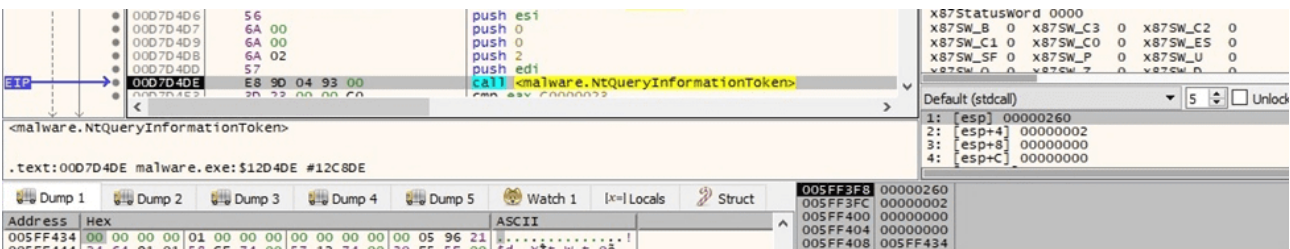


Figure 22 The OpenProcess API is utilized to open a local process object (0x438 = PROCESS\_QUERY\_INFORMATION | PROCESS\_VM\_WRITE | PROCESS\_VM\_READ | PROCESS\_VM\_OPERATION):

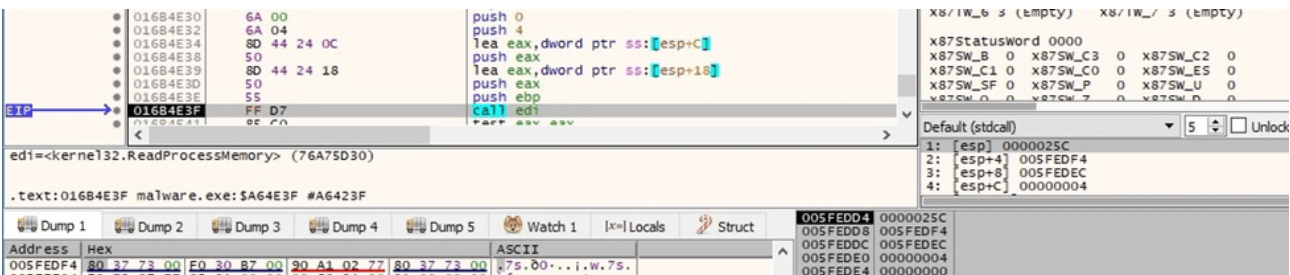


Figure 23 The malicious binary retrieves a pointer to a PEB structure using the ZwQueryInformationProcess routine (0x0 = ProcessBasicInformation):

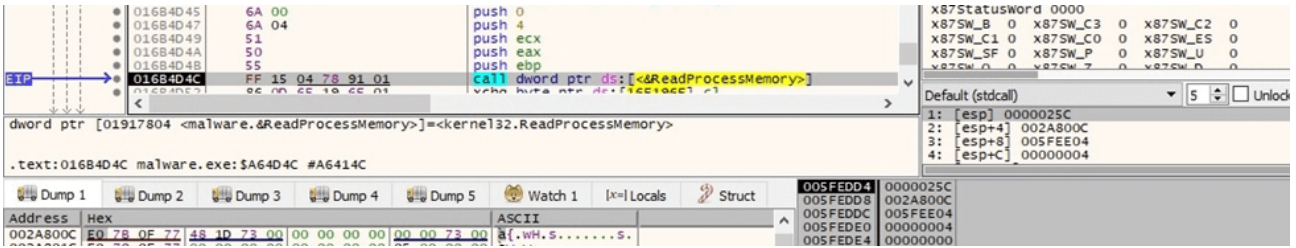


Figure 24 The executable retrieves a pointer to a PEB\_LDR\_DATA structure containing information about the loaded modules in the process and then to the head of a doubly linked list that contains the loaded modules:

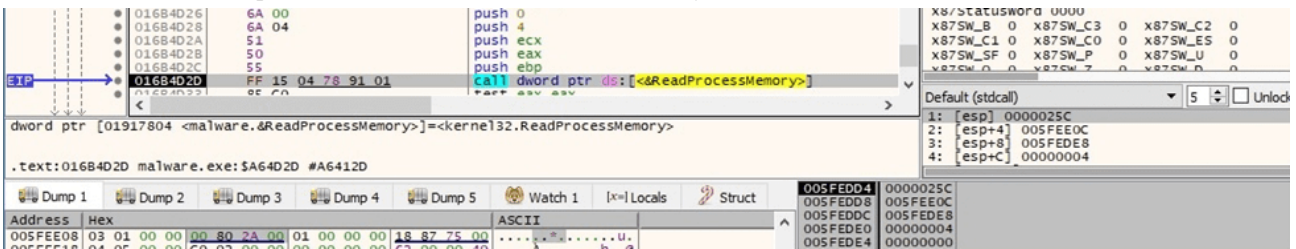


Figure 25

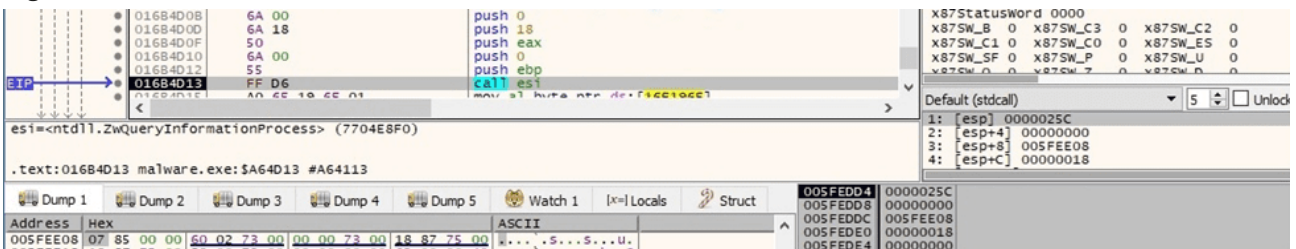


Figure 26 The path of the image file for the current process is retrieved using ReadProcessMemory:

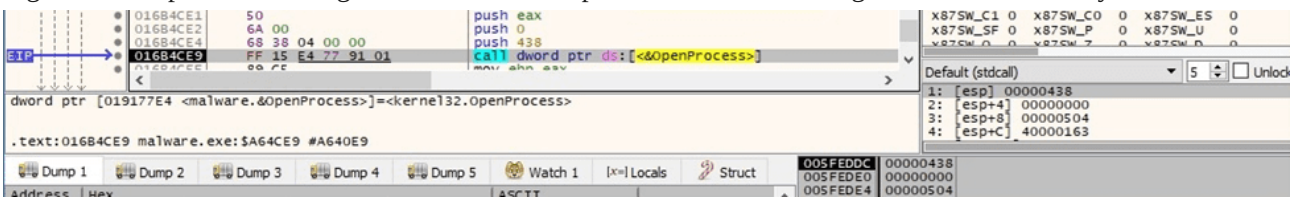


Figure 27

## Privilege escalation via UAC bypass using CMSTPLUA COM interface

The ransomware initializes the COM library for use by the current thread via a call to CoInitializeEx (0x2 = COINIT\_APARTMENTTHREADED):

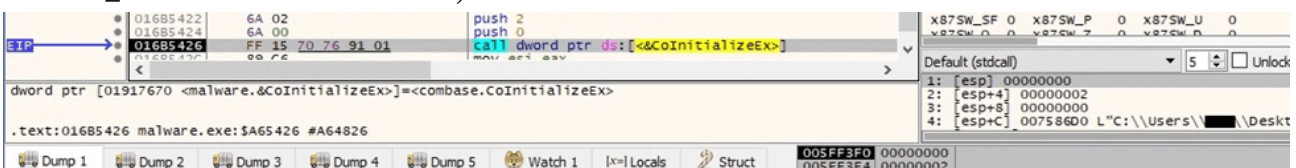


Figure 28 BlackCat ransomware uses the auto-elevated CMSTPLUA interface {3E5FC7F9-9A51-4367-9063-A120244FBEC7} in order to escalate privileges:

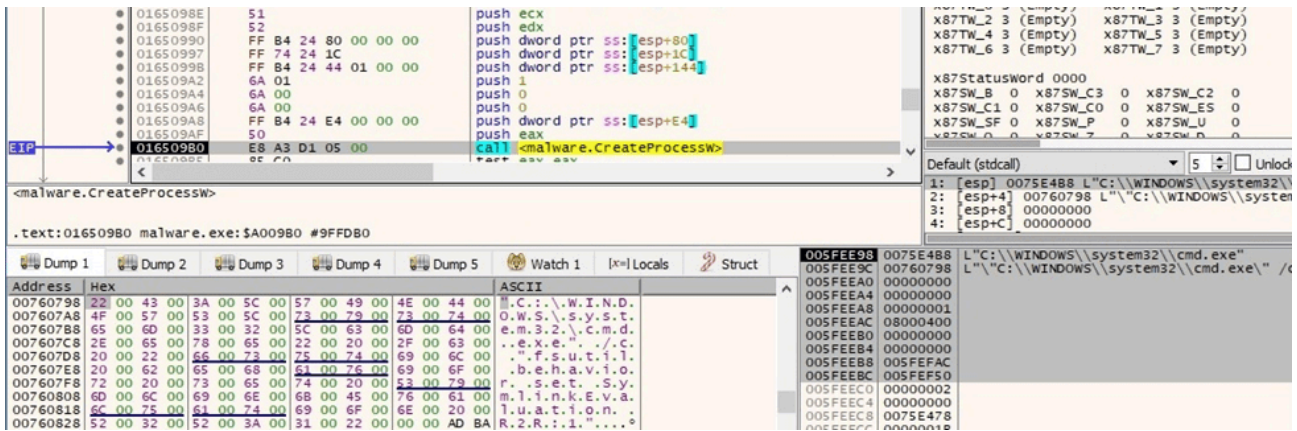


Figure 29 The initial executable is spawned with administrative privileges:

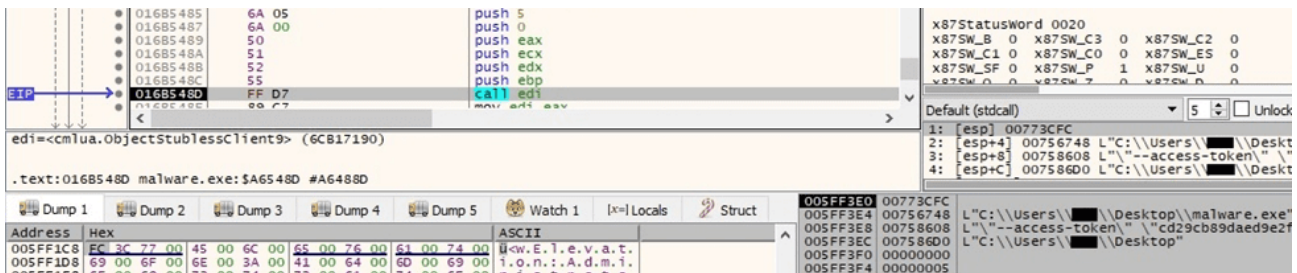


Figure 30 The LookupPrivilegeValueW routine is utilized to retrieve the locally unique identifier that represents the following privileges:

- SeIncreaseQuotaPrivilege SeSecurityPrivilege SeTakeOwnershipPrivilege
- SeLoadDriverPrivilege SeSystemProfilePrivilege SeSystemtimePrivilege
- SeProfileSingleProcessPrivilege SeIncreaseBasePriorityPrivilege
- SeCreatePagefilePrivilege SeBackupPrivilege SeRestorePrivilege
- SeShutdownPrivilege SeDebugPrivilege SeSystemEnvironmentPrivilege
- SeChangeNotifyPrivilege SeRemoteShutdownPrivilege SeUndockPrivilege
- SeManageVolumePrivilege SeImpersonatePrivilege SeCreateGlobalPrivilege
- SeIncreaseWorkingSetPrivilege SeTimeZonePrivilege
- SeCreateSymbolicLinkPrivilege SeDelegateSessionUserImpersonatePrivilege

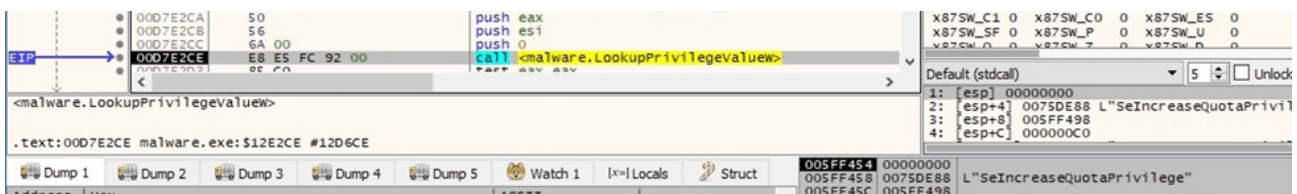


Figure 31 All the above privileges are enabled in the access token using AdjustTokenPrivileges:

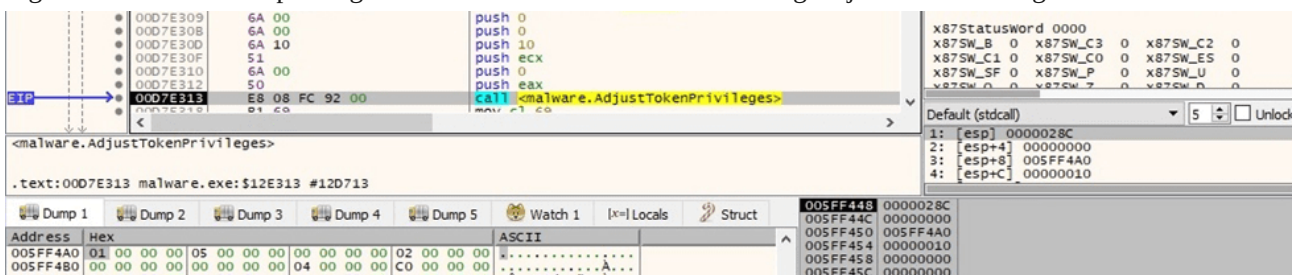


Figure 32 The binary creates the following processes that enable “remote to local” and “remote to remote”

symbolic links on the local machine:

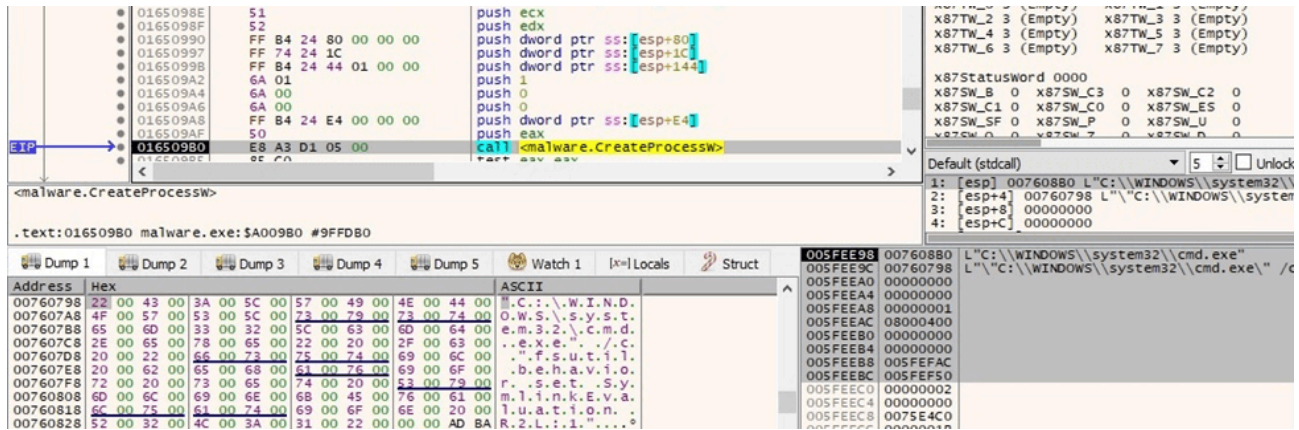


Figure 33

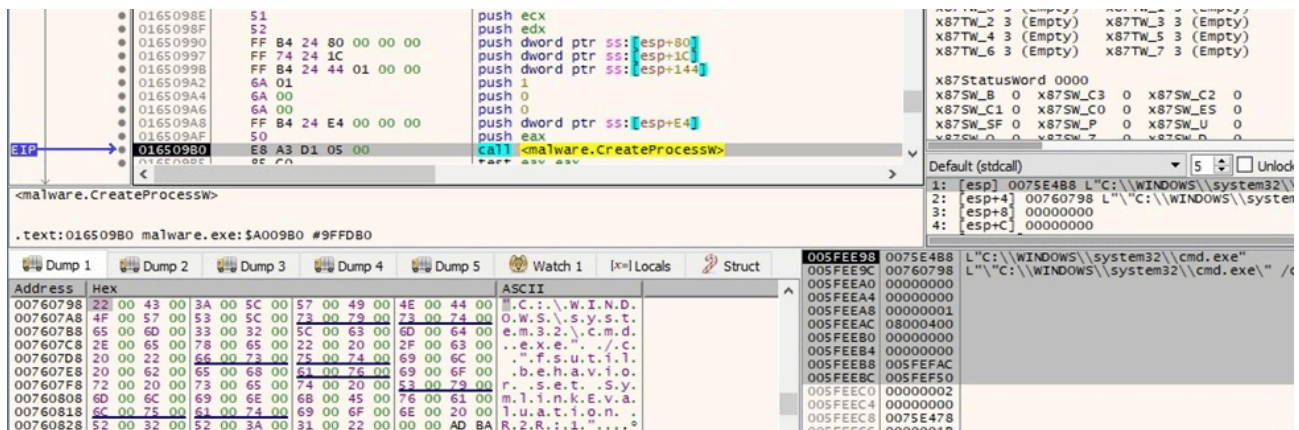


Figure 34 The malware tries to stop the Internet Information service (IIS) using IISReset.exe:

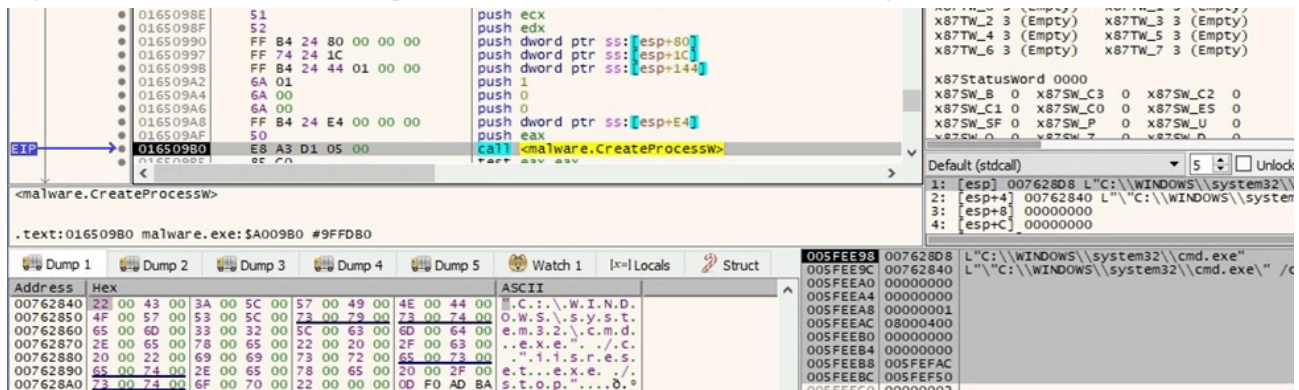


Figure 35 The ransomware deletes all volume shadow copies using the vssadmin.exe utility:

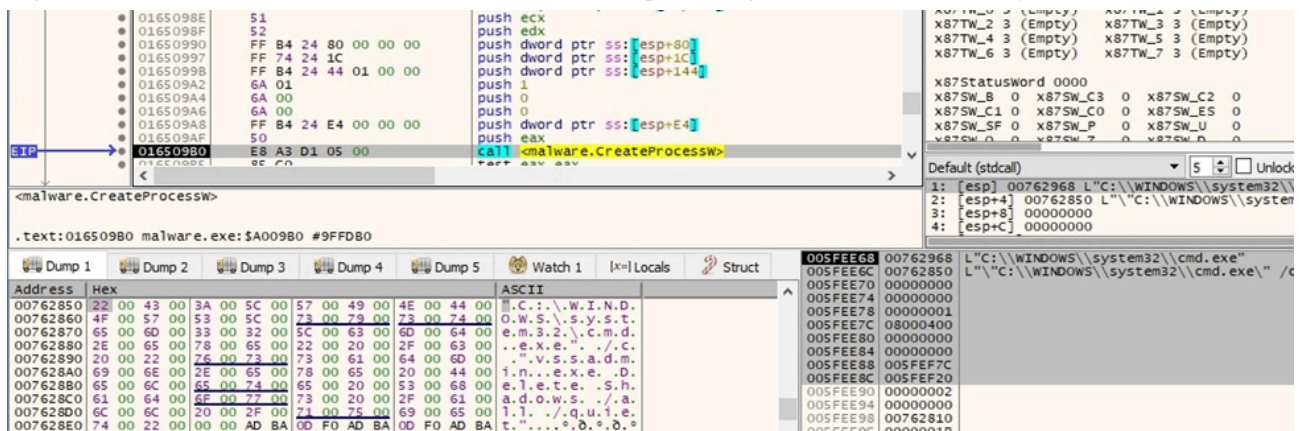


Figure 36 There is also a second process that is responsible for deleting all volume shadow copies with wmic:

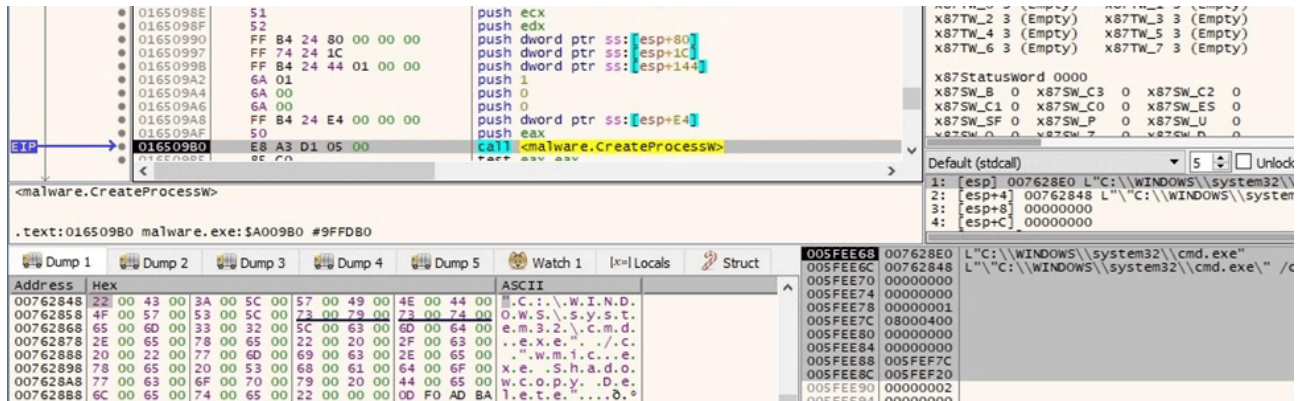


Figure 37 Interestingly, the malware runs the following command that is incomplete and returns an error:

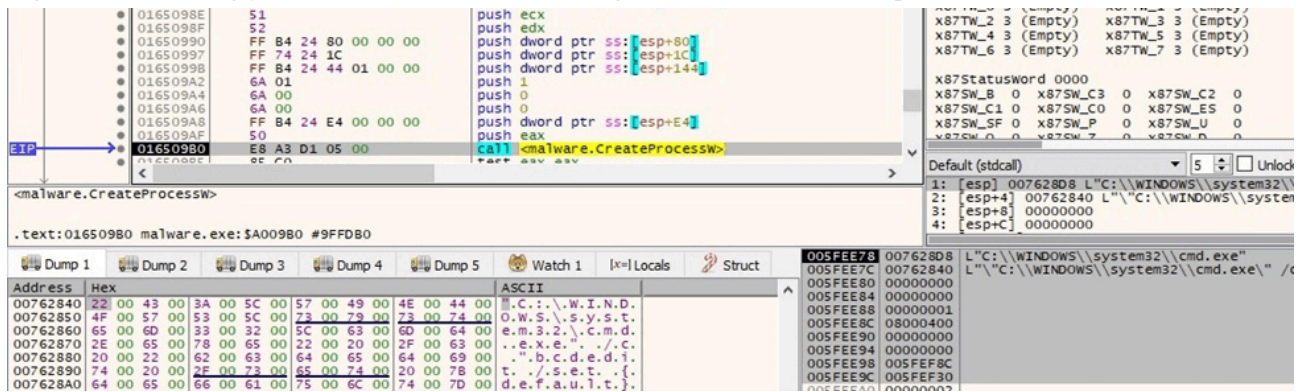


Figure 38

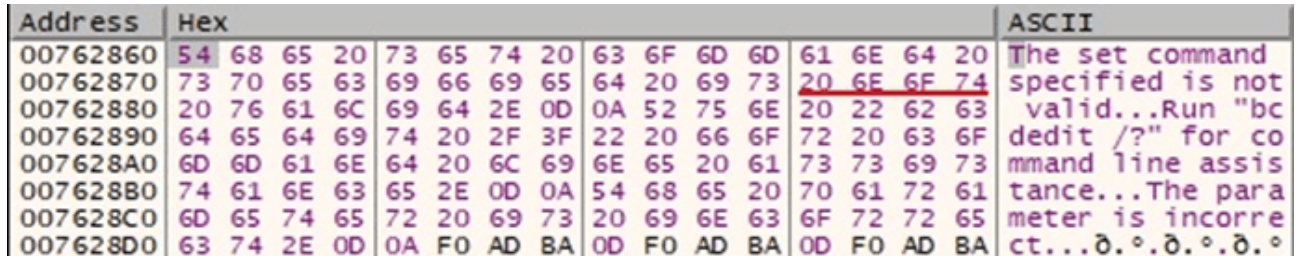


Figure 39 The binary disables Automatic Repair using the bcdedit tool:

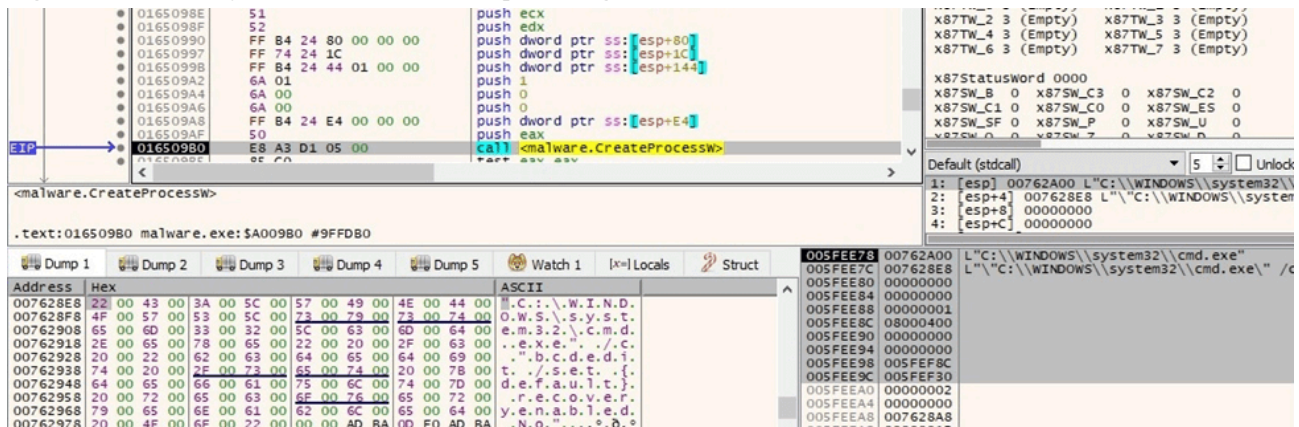


Figure 40 The ransomware tries to clear all event logs, however, the command is incorrect and returns an error, as highlighted below:

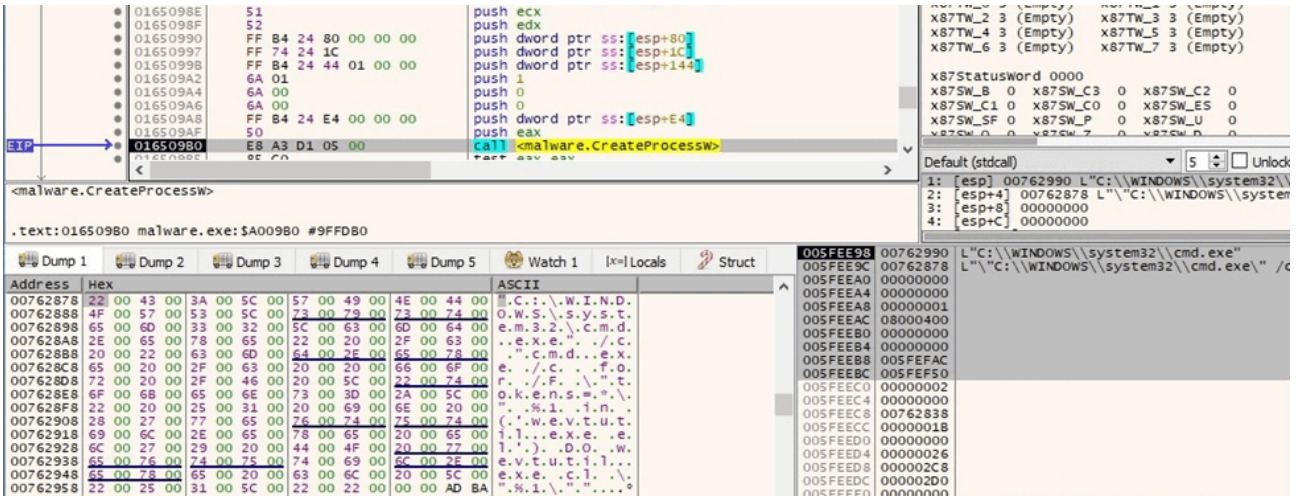


Figure 41

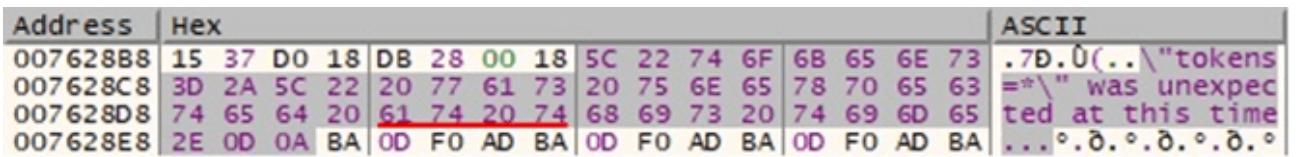


Figure 42

### Killing targeted services

The binary opens the service control manager database via a function call to OpenSCManagerW (0xF003F = SC\_MANAGER\_ALL\_ACCESS):

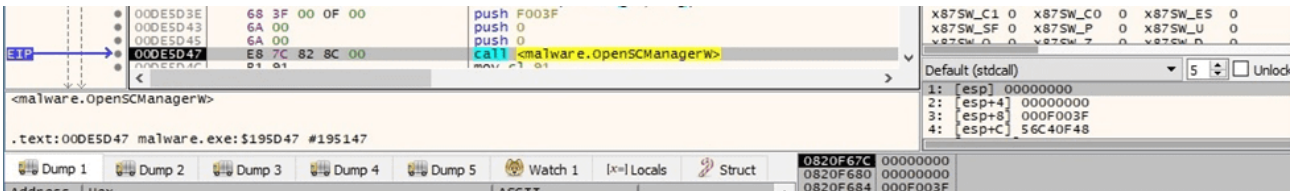


Figure 43 The process obtains a list of active services using EnumServicesStatusExW (0x30 = SERVICE\_WIN32, 0x1 = SERVICE\_ACTIVE):

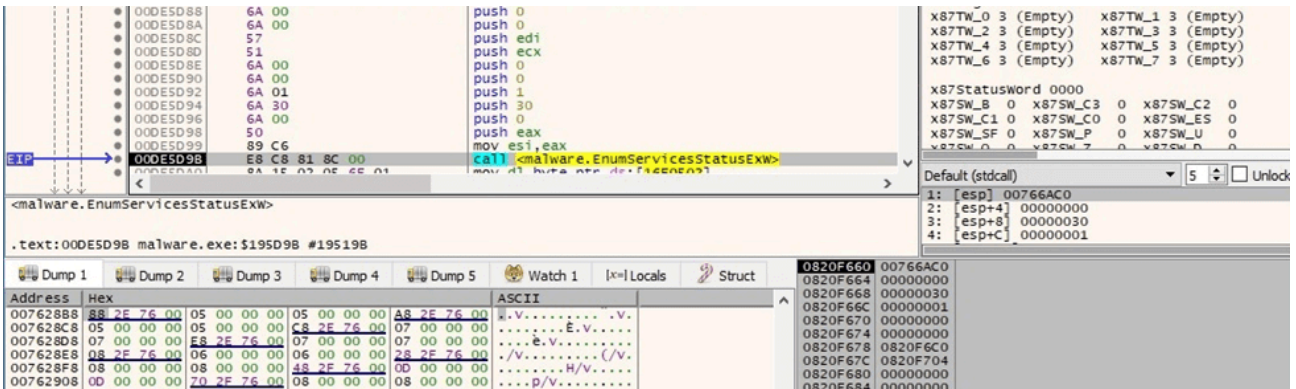


Figure 44 The malware targets the list of services from the kill\_services element in the BlackCat configuration. A targeted service is opened by calling the OpenServiceW routine (0x2c = SERVICE\_STOP | SERVICE\_ENUMERATE\_DEPENDENTS | SERVICE\_QUERY\_STATUS):



Figure 45 EnumDependentServicesW is utilized to retrieve the active services that depend on the targeted service (0x1 = SERVICE\_ACTIVE):

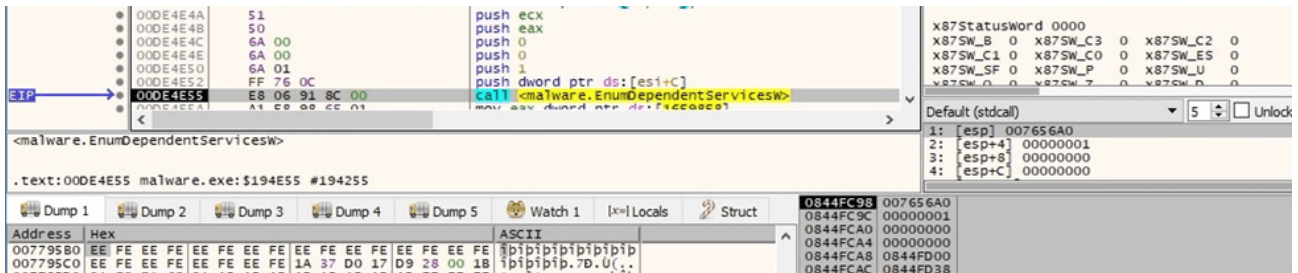


Figure 46 BlackCat stops the targeted service using the ControlService function (0x1 = SERVICE\_CONTROL\_STOP):

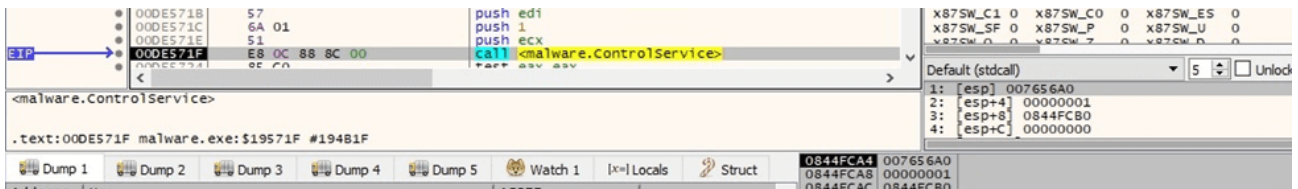


Figure 47

## Killing targeted processes

The executable takes a snapshot of all processes and threads in the system (0xF = TH32CS\_SNAPALL):

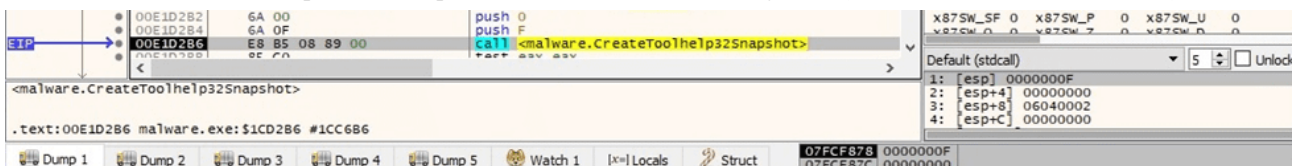


Figure 48 The processes are enumerated using the Process32FirstW and Process32NextW APIs:

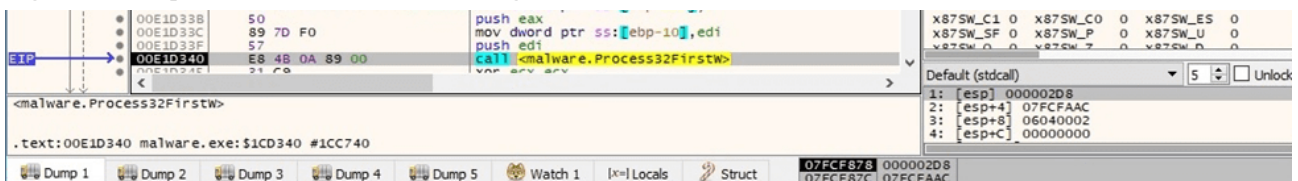


Figure 49

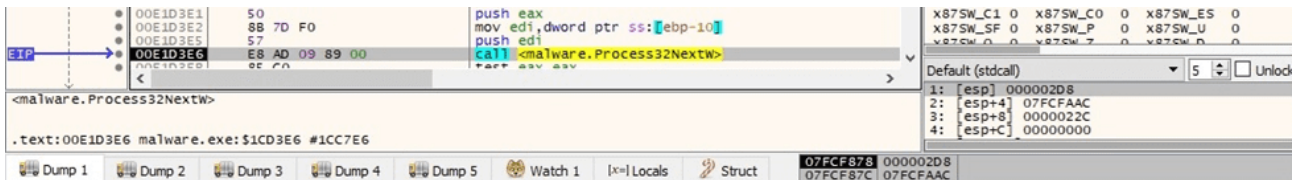


Figure 50 The malware targets the list of processes from the kill\_processes element in the BlackCat configuration. It opens a targeted process using OpenProcess (0x1 = PROCESS\_TERMINATE):

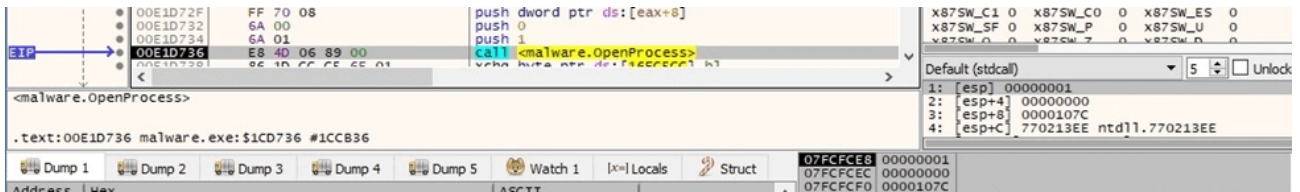


Figure 51 The ransomware terminates the targeted process by calling the TerminateProcess API:

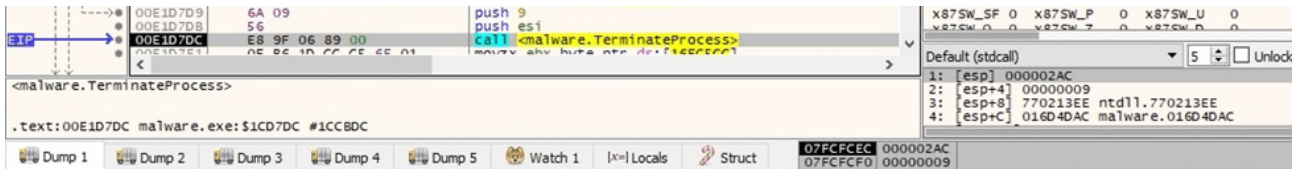


Figure 52 The binary spawns multiple child processes by adding the “-child” parameter to the command line (see figure 53). The new processes run in the security context of credentials that were specified in the credentials entry from the BlackCat configuration.

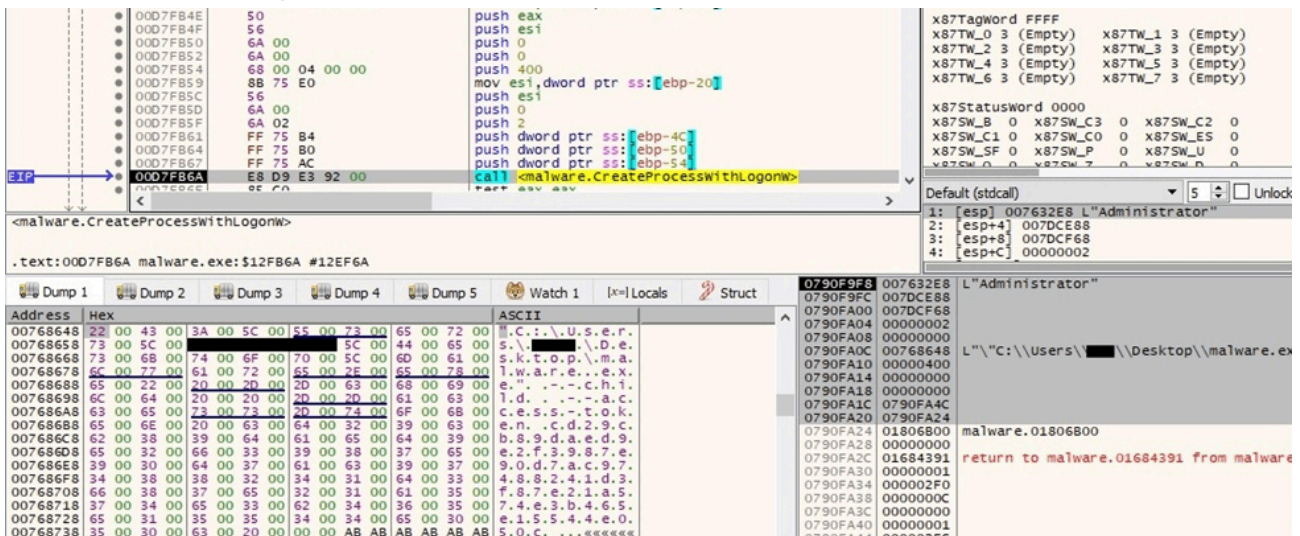


Figure 53 The number of network requests the Server Service can make is set to the maximum by modifying “HKLM\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanServer\Parameters\MaxMpxCt” Registry value:

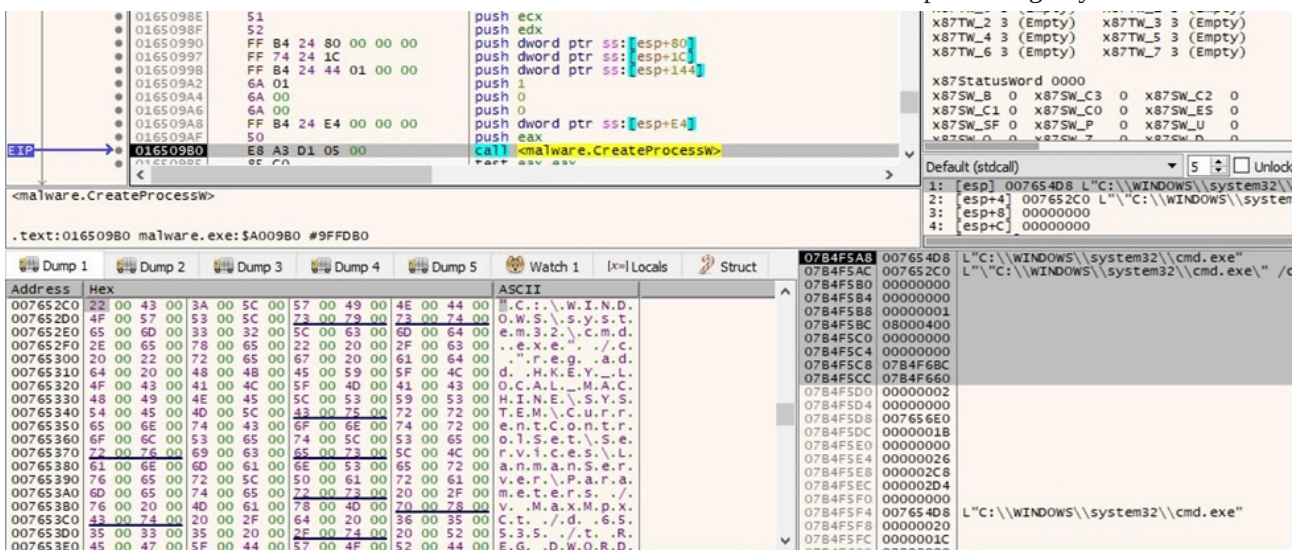


Figure 54 The malicious process obtains the ARP table using the arp command, as shown below:

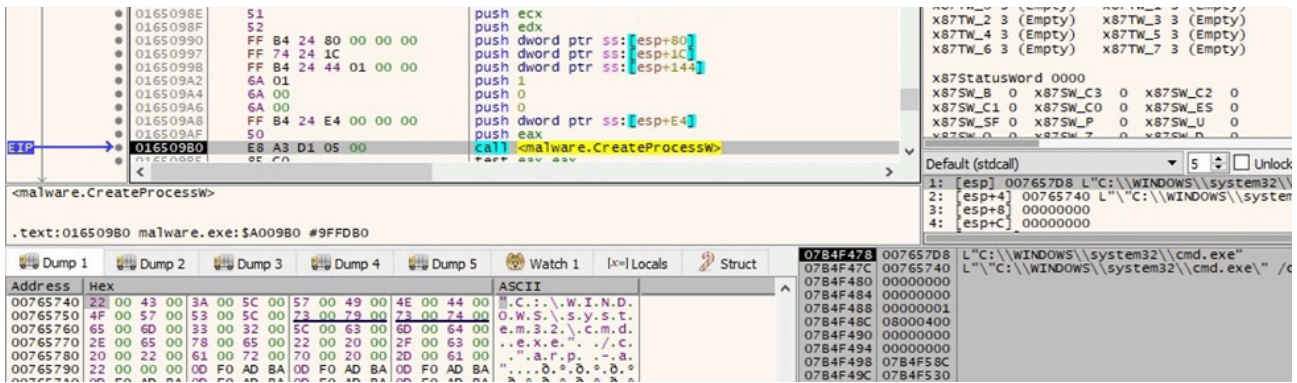


Figure 55 The net use command is utilized to connect to the local computer using different credentials stored in the BlackCat configuration:

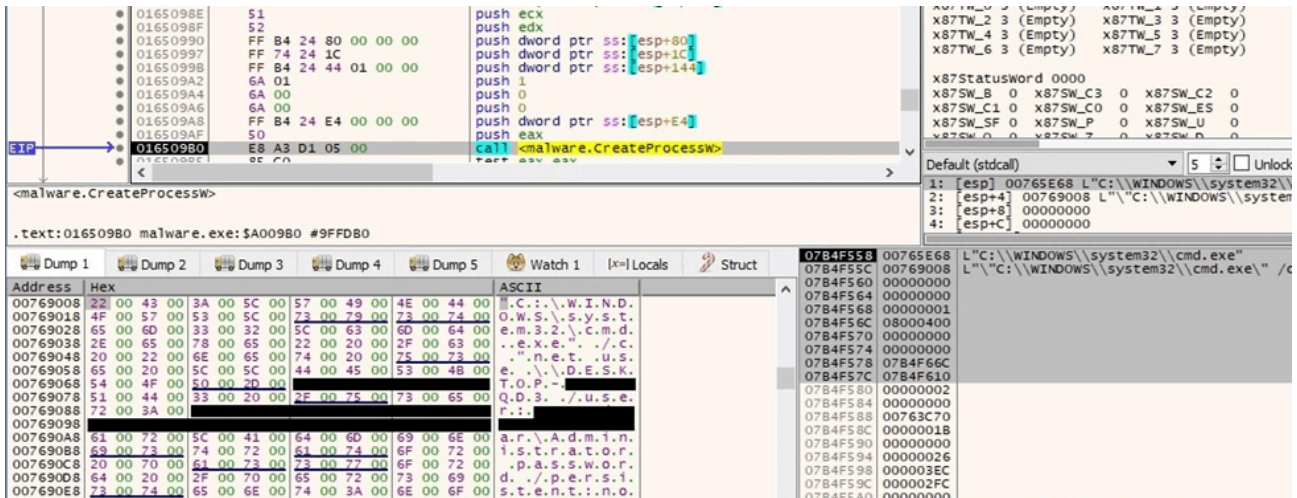


Figure 56 The malware retrieves the currently available disk drives by calling the GetLogicalDrives routine:

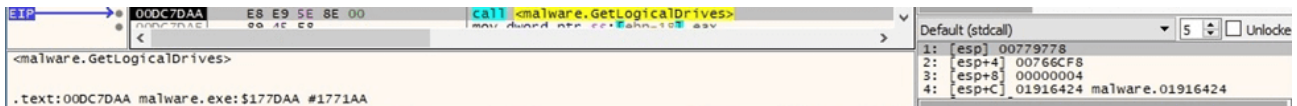


Figure 57 The GetDriveTypeW API is utilized to obtain the drive type:

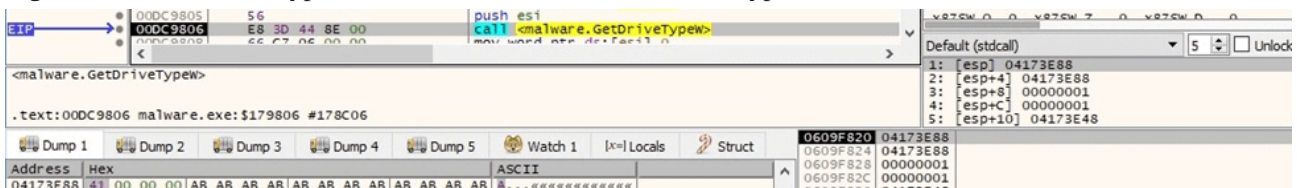


Figure 58 The ransomware starts scanning the volumes on the local machine using FindFirstVolumeW:

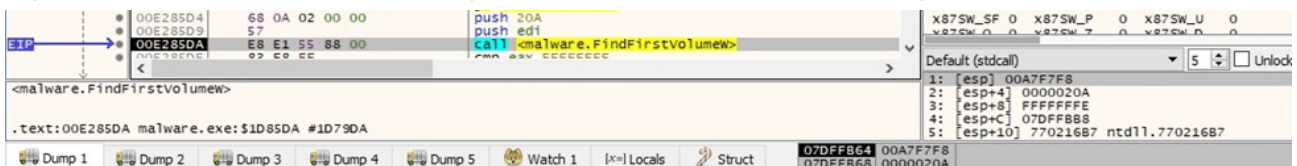


Figure 59 The list of drive letters and mounted folder paths for the above volume is extracted by the malware:

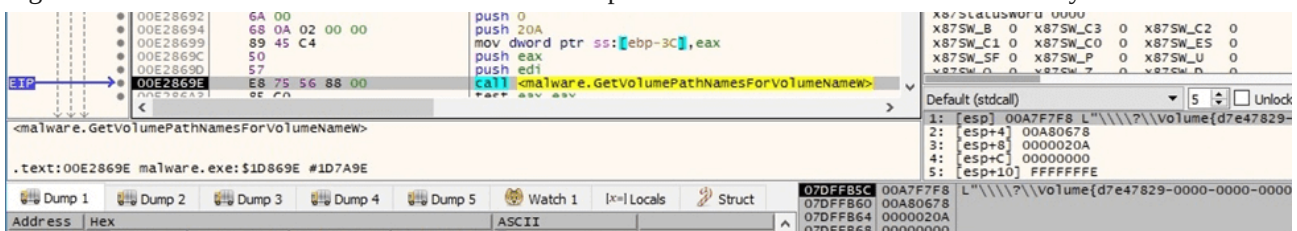


Figure 60 The volume's enumeration continues by calling the FindNextVolumeW function:

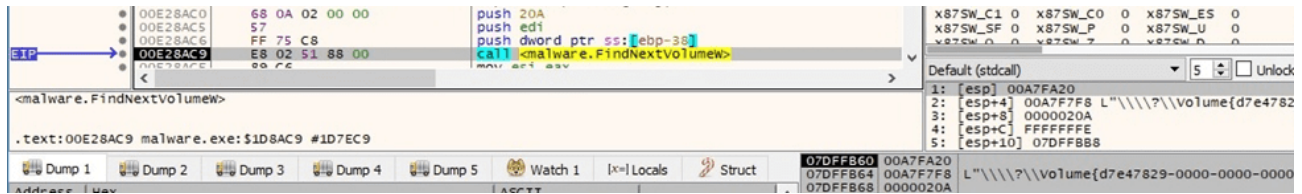


Figure 61 All unmounted volumes are mounted via a function call to SetVolumeMountPointW:

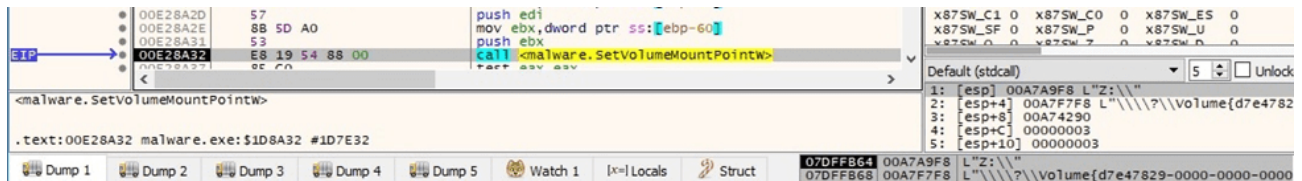


Figure 62 BlackCat traverses the file system using the FindFirstFileW and FindNextFileW APIs:

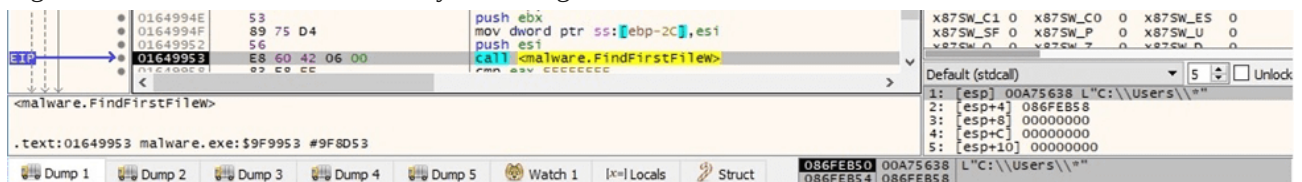


Figure 63

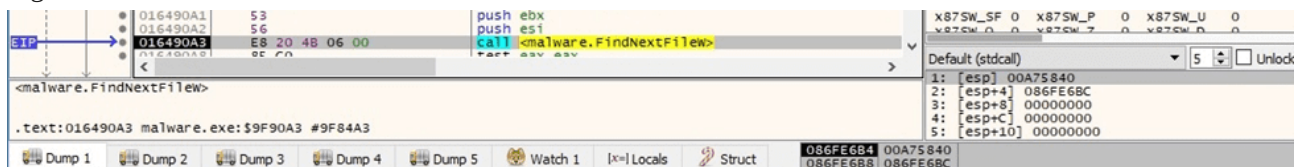


Figure 64 The BlackCat configuration is stored in JSON form and is decrypted at runtime. It contains:

- the extension appended to the encrypted files
- RSA public key that is used to encrypt the AES encryption key
- ransom note name and content
- stolen credentials specific to the victim's environment
- encryption cipher: AES
- list of services and processes to be killed
- list of folders, files, and extensions to be skipped
- boolean values that indicate network discovery, lateral movement, setting the Desktop Wallpaper, killing VMware ESXi virtual machines, removing VMware ESXi virtual machine snapshots, excluding VMware ESXi virtual machines from termination



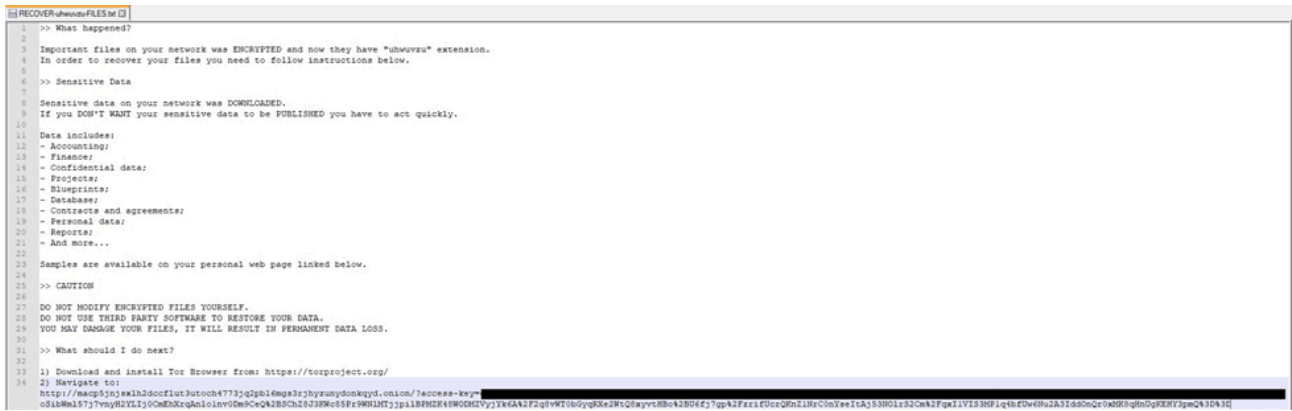


Figure 69 The file's extension is changed using the MoveFileExW function. The renamed file is opened using CreateFileW (0x7 = FILE\_SHARE\_DELETE | FILE\_SHARE\_WRITE | FILE\_SHARE\_READ, 0x3 = OPEN\_EXISTING, 0x02000000 = FILE\_FLAG\_BACKUP\_SEMANTICS):

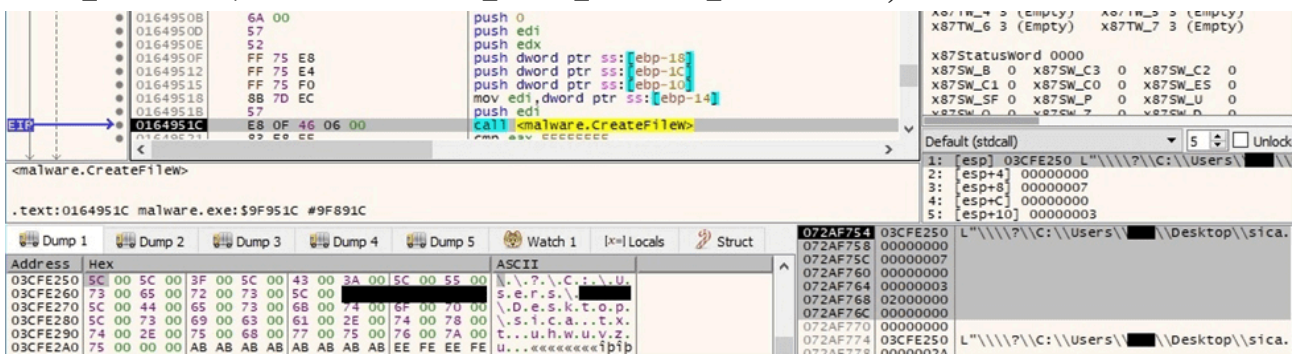


Figure 70 Interestingly, BlackCat creates intermediary files called “checkpoints-**<encrypted file name>**” during the encryption process:

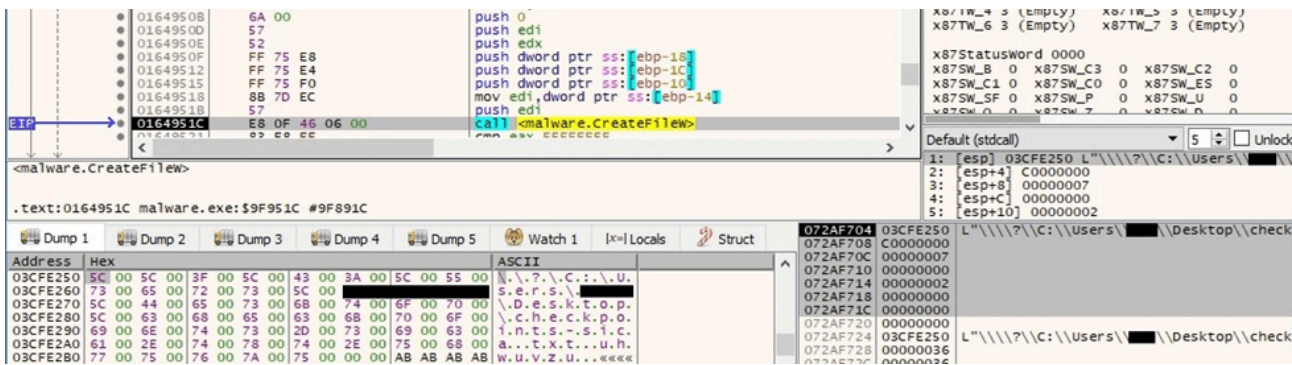


Figure 71 The malware generates 16 random bytes that will be used to derive the AES key:

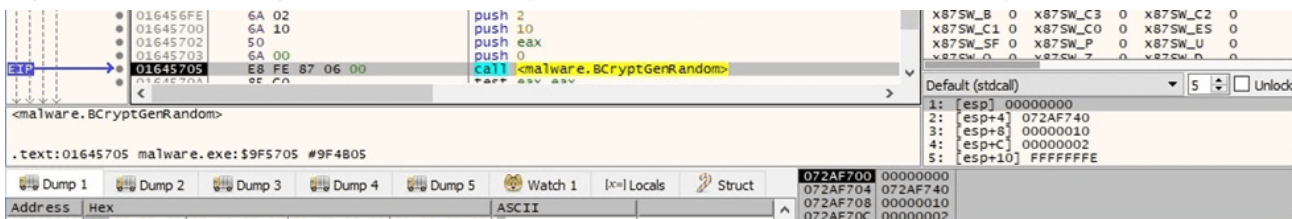


Figure 72 The ransomware moves the file pointer to the beginning of the file by calling the SetFilePointerEx API (0x0 = FILE\_BEGIN):

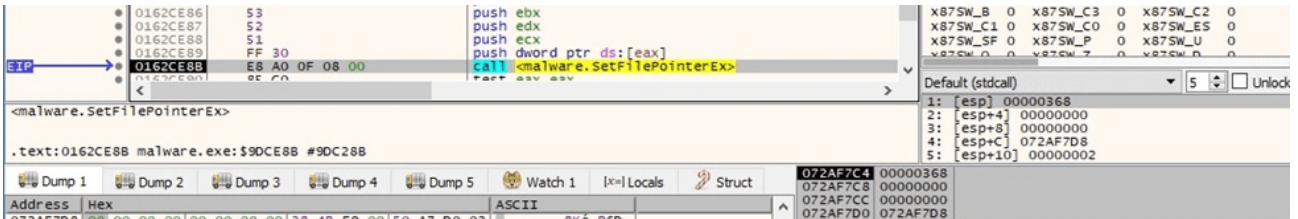


Figure 73 The process reads 4 bytes from the beginning of the file using ReadFile:

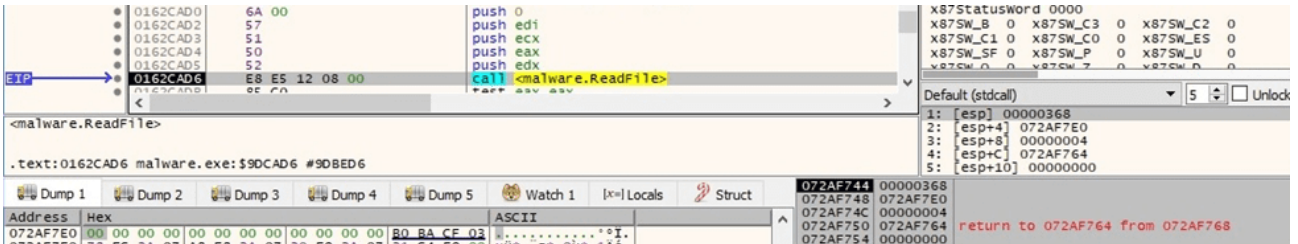


Figure 74 A JSON form containing the encryption cipher (AES), the AES key used to encrypt the file, the data, and the chunk size, is constructed in the process memory:

Address	Hex	ASCII
03D13F80	7B 22 76 65 72 73 69 6F 6E 22 3A 30 2C 22 6D 6F	{"version":0,"mode":"Full","cipher":"Aes","private_key":
03D13F90	64 65 22 3A 22 46 75 6C 6C 22 2C 22 63 69 70 68	,"data_size":1000,"chunk_size":25362816,"finished":false}
03D13FA0	65 72 22 3A 22 41 65 73 22 2C 22 70 72 69 76 61	
03D13FB0	74 65 5F 68 65 79 22 3A 5B 31 38 34 2C 31 32 39	
03D13FC0	2C 31 34 37 2C 31 31 36 2C 34 32 2C 32 31 31 2C	
03D13FD0	35 35 2C 38 31 2C 34 33 2C 31 39 37 2C 31 35 2C	
03D13FE0	32 34 33 2C 31 31 30 2C 32 33 33 2C 32 33 36 2C	
03D13FF0	31 37 35 5D 2C 22 64 61 74 61 5F 73 69 7A 65 22	
03D14000	3A 31 30 30 30 2C 22 63 68 75 6E 68 5F 73 69 7A	
03D14010	65 22 3A 32 35 33 36 32 38 31 36 2C 22 66 69 6E	
03D14020	69 73 68 65 64 22 3A 66 61 6C 73 65 7D FO AD BA	

Figure 75 The binary generates 0x50 (80) random bytes that are used to border the JSON form. The resulting buffer has a size of 256 bytes and is rotated using instructions such as pshufllw:

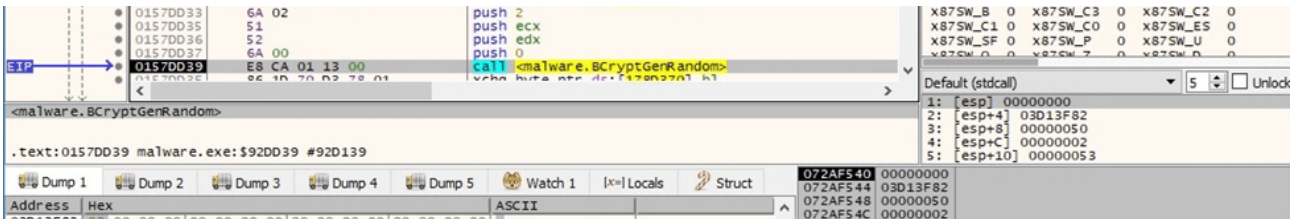


Figure 76

Address	Hex	ASCII
03D04BD8	7D 65 73 6C 61 66 3A 22 64 65 68 73 69 6E 69 66	}eslaf:"dehsinif
03D04BE8	22 2C 36 31 38 32 36 33 35 32 3A 22 65 7A 69 73	",61826352:"ezis
03D04BF8	5F 68 6E 75 68 63 22 2C 30 30 30 31 3A 22 65 7A	_knuhc",0001:"ez
03D04C08	69 73 5F 61 74 61 64 22 2C 5D 35 37 31 2C 36 33	is_atad",]571,63
03D04C18	32 2C 33 33 32 2C 30 31 31 2C 33 34 32 2C 35 31	2,332,011,342,51
03D04C28	2C 37 39 31 2C 33 34 2C 31 38 2C 35 35 2C 31 31	,791,34,18,55,11
03D04C38	32 2C 32 34 2C 36 31 31 2C 37 34 31 2C 39 32 31	2,24,611,741,921
03D04C48	2C 34 38 31 5B 3A 22 79 65 68 5F 65 74 61 76 69	,481[:"yek_etavi
03D04C58	72 70 22 2C 22 73 65 41 22 3A 22 72 65 68 70 69	rp", "seA": "rehpi
03D04C68	63 22 2C 22 6C 6C 75 46 22 3A 22 65 64 6F 6D 22	c", "lluF": "edom
03D04C78	2C 30 3A 22 6E 6F 69 73 72 65 76 22 7B 00 80 6A	,0:"noisrev"{.j
03D04C88	64 88 A7 F6 63 51 17 91 B9 9F 6C 4E BC CC 78 CF	d.söcQ...lN4ixI
03D04C98	FB AA CF 08 B8 9F 6F 02 78 D0 E9 02 70 FB F2 B6	ü=I...o.xDé.püöf
03D04CA8	B4 98 C5 87 2C C4 BD EE 8D B8 3D 4F 8E 25 64 9C	.Ä...Ä&f...=0.%d.
03D04CB8	F0 6F 3A 2C F3 71 99 C3 C1 B8 C4 01 AF C1 DC 5D	öo: ,öq.ÄÄ.Ä.ÄÜ
03D04CC8	61 41 50 2D 62 46 28 08 1C 9D F7 8F 51 8E 02 00	aAP-bf(...÷.Q...

Figure 77 A 4-byte border “19 47 B2 CE” that separates the encrypted file content from the encrypted AES key is written to the file:

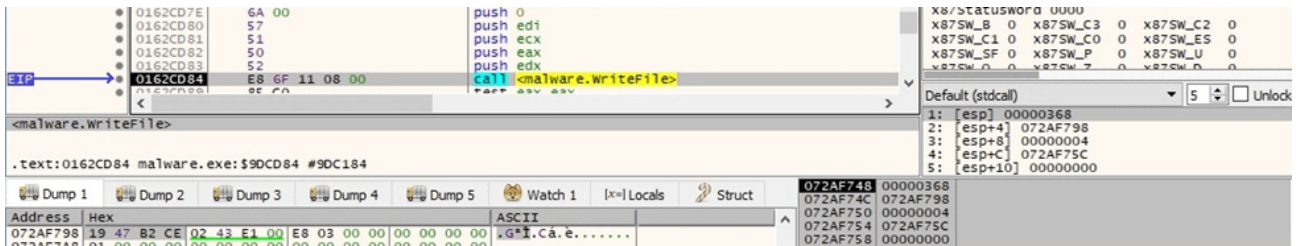


Figure 78 The buffer that contains the AES key presented in figure 77 is encrypted with the RSA public key from the BlackCat configuration. The result is written to the file using WriteFile:

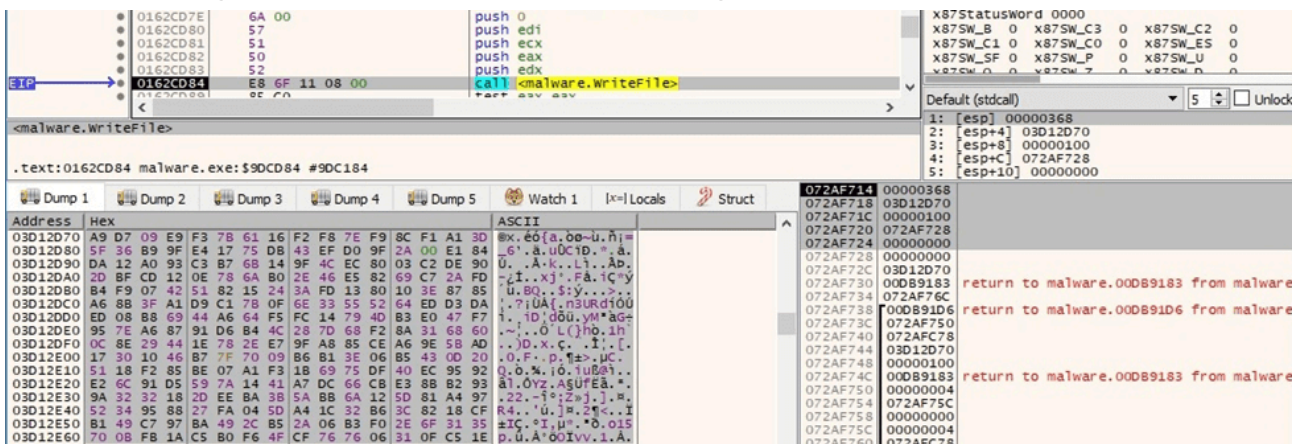


Figure 79 The size of encrypted key (0x100) is written to the file:

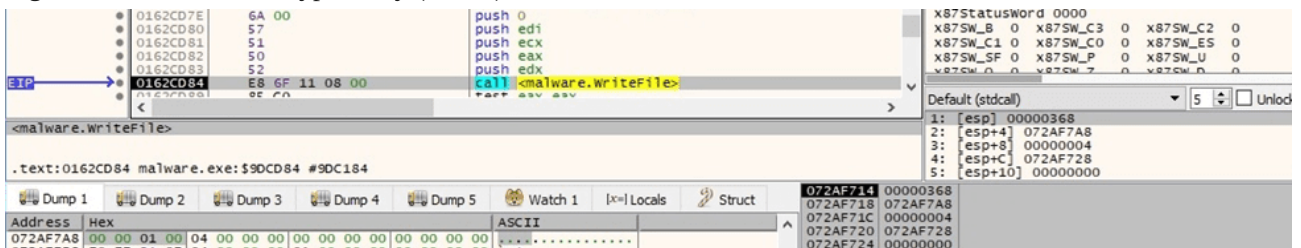


Figure 80 The file content is read by using the ReadFile function:

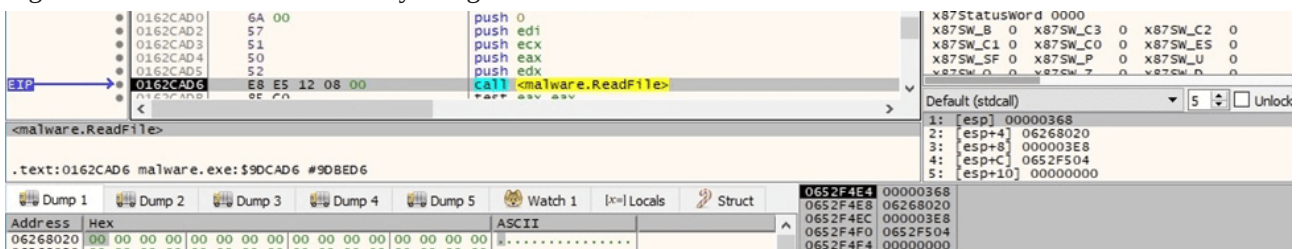


Figure 81 The file content is encrypted using the AES-128 algorithm. The malware uses the aesenc and aesenclast instructions for this purpose:

```

00DD84C7 66 0F 38 DC D0 aesenc xmm2,xmm0
00DD84CC 66 0F 38 DC D8 aesenc xmm3,xmm0
00DD84D1 66 0F 38 DC E0 aesenc xmm4,xmm0
00DD84D6 66 0F 38 DC E8 aesenc xmm5,xmm0
00DD84DB 66 0F 38 DC F0 aesenc xmm6,xmm0
00DD84E0 66 0F 38 DC F8 aesenc xmm7,xmm0
00DD84E5 66 0F 38 DC C8 aesenc xmm1,xmm0
00DD84EA 66 0F 7F 14 24 movdqa xmmword ptr ss:[esp],xmm2
00DD84EF 66 0F 6F 54 24 10 movdqa xmm2,xmmword ptr ss:[esp+10]
00DD84F5 66 0F 38 DC D0 aesenc xmm2,xmm0
00DD84FA 66 0F 6F 41 20 movdqa xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[ecx+20]
00DD84FF 66 0F 7F 54 24 10 movdqa xmmword ptr ss:[esp+10],xmm2
00DD8505 66 0F 6F 14 24 movdqa xmm2,xmmword ptr ss:[esp]
00DD850A 66 0F 38 DC D8 aesenc xmm3,xmm0
00DD850F 66 0F 38 DC E0 aesenc xmm4,xmm0
00DD8514 66 0F 38 DC E8 aesenc xmm5,xmm0
00DD8519 66 0F 38 DC F0 aesenc xmm6,xmm0
00DD851E 66 0F 38 DC F8 aesenc xmm7,xmm0
00DD8523 66 0F 38 DC C8 aesenc xmm1,xmm0
00DD8528 66 0F 38 DC D0 aesenc xmm2,xmm0
00DD852D 66 0F 7F 14 24 movdqa xmmword ptr ss:[esp],xmm2
00DD8532 66 0F 6F 54 24 10 movdqa xmm2,xmmword ptr ss:[esp+10]
00DD8538 66 0F 38 DC D0 aesenc xmm2,xmm0
00DD853D 66 0F 6F 41 30 movdqa xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[ecx+30]
00DD8542 66 0F 7F 54 24 10 movdqa xmmword ptr ss:[esp+10],xmm2
00DD8549 66 0F 6F 14 24 movdqa xmm2,xmmword ptr ss:[esp]

```

Figure 82

```

EIP 00DD87A0 55 push ebp
00DD87A1 89 E5 mov ebp,esp
00DD87A3 53 push ebx
00DD87A4 8B 45 08 mov eax,dword ptr ss:[ebp+8]
00DD87A7 66 0F 6F 02 movdqa xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx]
00DD87A8 B3 F1 mov b1,F1
00DD87AD 66 0F EF 00 pxor xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[eax]
00DD87B1 66 0F 38 DC 42 10 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+10]
00DD87B7 66 0F 38 DC 42 20 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+20]
00DD87BD 66 0F 38 DC 42 30 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+30]
00DD87C3 66 0F 38 DC 42 40 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+40]
00DD87C9 66 0F 38 DC 42 50 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+50]
00DD87CF 66 0F 38 DC 42 60 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+60]
00DD87D5 66 0F 38 DC 42 70 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+70]
00DD87DB 66 0F 38 DC 82 80 00 00 00 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+80]
00DD87E4 86 1D FE 8B 6E 01 xchg byte ptr ds:[16E88FE],b1
00DD87EA 66 0F 38 DC 82 90 00 00 00 aesenc xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+90]
00DD87F3 66 0F 7F 00 movdqa xmmword ptr ds:[eax],xmm0
00DD87F7 66 0F 38 DD 82 A0 00 00 00 aesenc last xmm0,xmmword ptr ds:[edx+A0]
00DD8800 66 0F 7F 01 movdqa xmmword ptr ds:[ecx],xmm0

```

Figure 83 The encrypted file content is written back to the file using WriteFile:

```

0162CD7E 6A 00 push 0
0162CD80 57 push edi
0162CD81 51 push ecx
0162CD82 50 push eax
0162CD83 52 push edx
EIP 0162CD84 E8 6F 11 08 00 call <malware.WriteFile>
0162CD88 8B 00 mov ebx,0
0162CD89 8B 00 mov ebx,0
<malware.WriteFile>
.text:0162CD84 malware.exe:$90CD84 #90C184
Dump 1 Dump 2 Dump 3 Dump 4 Dump 5 Watch 1 [x] Locals Struct
Address Hex ASCII
06268020 B7 54 58 E1 76 46 87 6D CA B3 50 2D 86 E3 96 85 *TX&vF.mE*P-.&.
06268030 86 C6 E9 6E 74 0A B3 0E 4D D7 F3 AB 4D A5 EE 67 .&ent.*.Mx0&M&ig
06268040 BA 31 4D B2 7A 90 9A 7F F4 FE 31 2B 23 19 8F 5E *1M*2...0p1+#..A
x87Statusword 0000
x87SW_B 0 x87SW_C3 0 x87SW_C2 0
x87SW_C1 0 x87SW_C0 0 x87SW_E5 0
x87SW_SF 0 x87SW_P 0 x87SW_U 0
x87SW_D 0 x87SW_Z 0 x87SW_D 0
Default (stdcall) 5 Unlock
1: [esp] 0000368
2: [esp+4] 06268020
3: [esp+8] 00003E8
4: [esp+C] 0652F508
5: [esp+10] 00000000
0652F4F4 0000368
0652F4F8 06268020
0652F4FC 00003E8
0652F500 0652F508
0652F504 00000000
0652F508 00000000
0652F50C 00000000

```

Figure 84 An example of an encrypted file is displayed below:

```

Progress 65%
Information
Speed: 41.46 Mb/s, Data: 149Mb/230Mb, Files processed: 199/284, Files scanned: 1642
workers
Queue
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-arm-vars.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-1386-code.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-1386-secure-code.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files\USBPCap\usbpcapand64.cat.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-1386-vars.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-x86_64-code.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\hppa-firmware.img.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\edk2-x86_64-secure-code.fd.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\openbios-ppc.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\openbios-sparc32.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\openbios-sparc64.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\palcode-c13pper.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\petalogix-m1605.dtb.uhuvwzu
C:\Program Files (x86)\qemu\qemu.svg.uhuvwzu

```

Figure 85 The ransomware creates a PNG image called “RECOVER-uhwvzu-FILES.txt.png”:

```

C:\Users\...\Desktop\malware.exe --access-token cd29cb89daed9e2f398:e90d/ac9748b241d3f8:e21a5:4e3b46e1544e050c --verbose
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting Supervisor
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting Discoverer
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting File Unlockers
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting File Processing Pipeline
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:pipeline:chunk_workers_supervisor: spawned_workers=2
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:pipeline:file_worker_pool: spawned_file_dispatchers=2
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:pipeline:file_worker_pool: spawned_chunk_work_infrastructure=2
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Detecting Other Instances
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting Cluster Service
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Connecting to Cluster
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: server=13518757112457831384
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: This is a Master Process
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:stack: Starting Platform
13:28:07 MASTER encrypt_lib:windows: Bootstrap Routine
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:privilege_escalation: win7_plus=true
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:privilege_escalation: token_is_admin=true
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:system_info: domain_name=
13:28:07 MASTER encrypt_lib:windows: strict_include_paths::local=[]
13:28:07 MASTER encrypt_lib:windows: strict_include_paths::remote=[]
13:28:07 MASTER encrypt_lib:windows: Initializing Networking Routine
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:system_info: username=
13:28:07 MASTER encrypt_lib:windows: IIS Stop
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:privilege_escalation: impersonate_spawn_trying: Administrator, .password
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:privilege_escalation: impersonate_spawn_trying: "C:\Users\...\Desktop\malware.exe" --child --access-token cd29cb89daed9e2f398:e90d/ac9748b241d3f8:e21a5:4e3b46e1544e050c --verbose
13:28:07 MASTER locket:core:os:windows:privilege_escalation: CreateProcessWithWow64 success, 1700
    
```

Figure 86

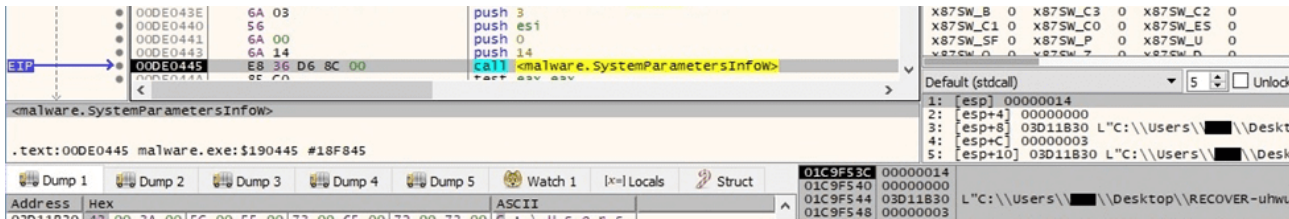


Figure 87 The Desktop wallpaper is changed to the above image by calling the SystemParametersInfoW API (0x14 = SPI\_SETDESKWALLPAPER, 0x3 = SPIF\_UPDATEINIFILE | SPIF\_SENDCHANGE):

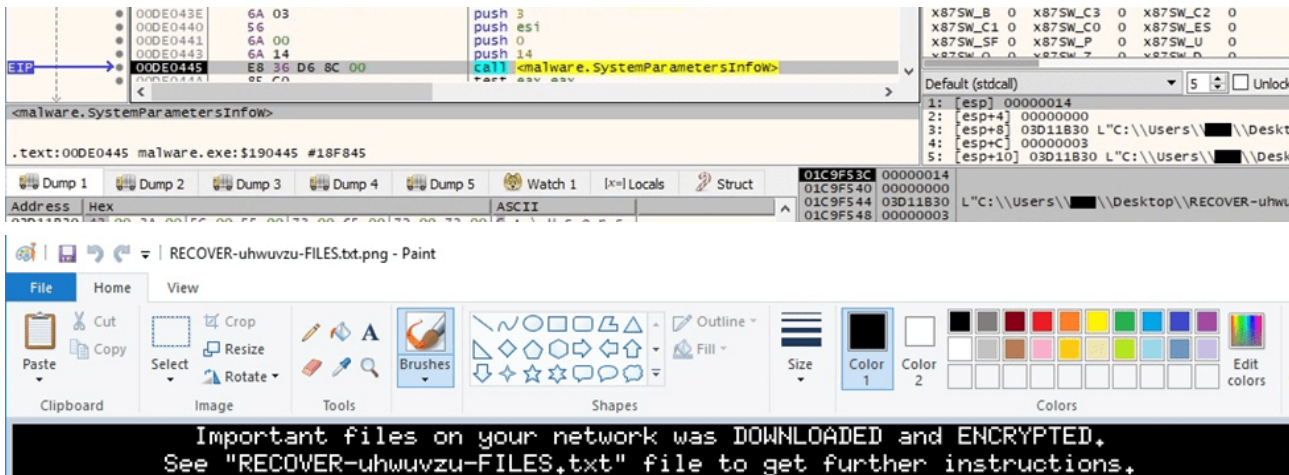


Figure 88

## Running with the `-verbose` parameter

The ransomware writes multiple actions to the command line output:

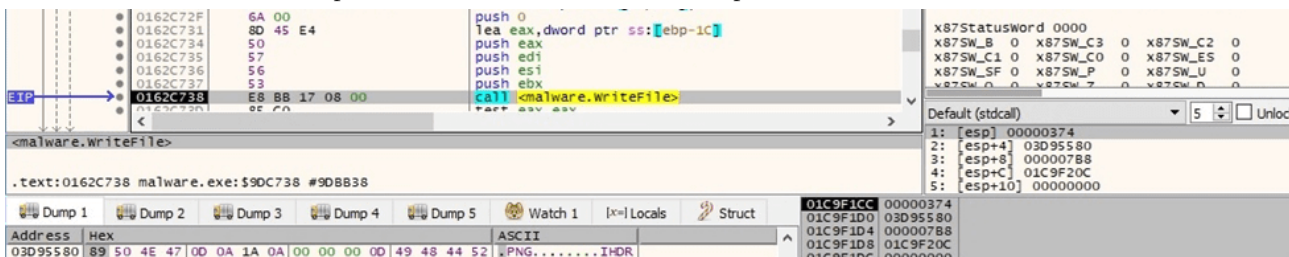


Figure 89

## Running with the `-extra-verbose` `-ui` parameters

The malware presents the relevant information in the following window:

```

sica.txt.uhwuvzu
Offset(h) 00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 0A 0B 0C 0D 0E 0F
000001B0 DD 63 AC D7 EB 79 F6 CA 2E 3C CE 98 12 84 78 C0  Yc~*æyøÊ.<î~.,xÅ
000001C0 4B 8C BB F0 38 76 CD CE AA CA 46 4D 87 56 59 08  KE»88vîî*ÊFM+VY.
000001D0 E7 51 F8 C7 3A 9F C4 4E 88 8A F2 1E 41 5F B7 7D  çQøÇ:YÂN`Šò.A_}
000001E0 C0 69 43 E9 05 09 30 29 40 B9 95 CB 78 EE D9 A8  ÀiCé..0)@²·ÈxiÛ`
000001F0 91 26 2A 78 2E 38 6E 91 5A 43 E9 4F B1 A7 AA CB  `&*x.8n`ZCéO+S*Ê
00000200 68 31 A7 1C 32 2C 59 16 9C 53 C8 2A 06 2D B6 0F  hl$.2,Y.æSÈ*.-q.
00000210 9E 51 9B 53 1B D8 19 50 EE FA 61 2F 41 0F CE 84  žQ>S.Ø.Piúa/A.î,,
00000220 27 66 F4 E8 1A F1 E7 8E 9E C8 1A D0 B9 83 C0 51  'fòè.ñçžžÈ.Đ`fAQ
00000230 69 84 2C 8B 20 0C E8 79 FD 01 17 42 24 AA 61 CD  i,,<.èyy..BŠ`aí
00000240 55 01 4E C4 D5 B2 85 52 63 03 F0 B9 1D 8D E8 A1  U.NÅÖ~...Rc.ð³..è;
00000250 69 A1 E4 2C F3 30 7E B1 87 F8 7B 9D AD 4D 8A 75  i;ä,ó0~±+ø{.MŠu
00000260 84 E2 B6 2A 66 18 03 3A FB 0A 1C 66 69 56 E8 75  „âq*f..:û..fiVèu
00000270 AC 7B 83 B7 46 05 19 63 2B A4 8D B4 A9 27 18 22  -{f·F..c+æ..@'."
00000280 42 EE 8E 76 B3 D4 67 8D B4 7E 70 3C C9 51 04 10  Bižv³Ög..~p<EQ..
00000290 08 0A 99 9B 6A 33 5C A2 DF 9F 81 3E 4A 2F 7E 7A  ..™~j3\c8Y.>J/~z
000002A0 8C 48 8C B7 C8 16 D3 95 8A 83 BB 90 15 7E EC 20  (EHC·È.Ó·Šf»...~ì
000002B0 A7 CF C5 BC 09 7E C8 19 83 ED CD 2C 42 76 1E 94  ŠIÄ¼.~È.fii, Bv."
000002C0 5B 77 C3 D9 C5 32 19 D3 91 6A 7A 16 F2 AE D1 94  [wÅÜÄ2.Ó'jz.øN"
000002D0 55 23 C6 FC F6 AA FA 22 1A 8A EB CF DB E9 71 47  U#Eüø²`ú".ŠèiÜéqG
000002E0 A2 CF 37 C8 33 BC C9 2D 75 1F 2F A4 E1 3D 02 A9  cI7È3¼È-u./hå=.ø
000002F0 EE F9 0A 7E 6C 3A 1D 51 D8 8A 53 E4 2D 2A A4 C1  iù..~1:QØŠŠä-*hÅ
00000300 32 38 D6 15 D4 3C 94 2A C8 1E 55 82 71 D8 63 10  280.0<~"*È.U,qøc.
00000310 C2 A6 60 D9 6F 9B 55 63 A1 3B A7 39 DB A3 C6 00  Å;`Üo>Uc; ;S9ÜLÆ.
00000320 87 1E E8 7F EA 8E 31 83 1C D1 1B B3 EF 3C 90 27  +.è.èžlf.N.~i<.'
00000330 B0 A1 05 9A 92 30 F1 60 50 E7 25 C9 25 50 BA 37  ;.š'0ñ`Pç&È&P07
00000340 9C 08 35 D6 66 A0 CB 1F CE 36 5B E1 0B 1C FE 09  æ.50f È.Íè[ã..p.
00000350 CA 41 AC D4 8C 8C E5 52 71 1F B6 11 EA 2F 5B C9  ÈA-ÖGEÄRq.q.è/[É
00000360 70 7C 63 88 7C AC 84 F0 EB A0 25 13 56 63 91 F6  p|c~|~..øè %Vc'ò
00000370 EC 00 DF EF A1 0C 60 71 4C C4 10 82 44 D7 9A 0F  i.š;î.~qLÄ..Dxš.
00000380 04 31 09 56 59 49 CD 1F OD 65 33 34 0E F7 99 13  .l.VYII..e34.±™.
00000390 14 F5 22 14 F1 OD CA C5 35 8D 2A 70 B6 60 AA A3  .ò".ñ.ÈÅ5.*pq`²è
000003A0 B6 4E 07 83 C8 83 73 25 37 42 65 87 FA 91 09 81  qN.fÈfs%7Be+ú'..
000003B0 04 69 6D 4A 5A F3 83 94 1D 58 E0 FE 2C E1 FD 89  .imJZóf".Xàp,áy%
000003C0 E7 9C E4 72 5E AA CB 76 74 27 F1 99 28 98 7D 13  çæär^`Èvt`ñ™(~).
000003D0 E2 A5 EF 53 1A 57 B6 BA 1F 38 12 07 EF BD 0E 71  à%is.Wq°.8..i%q
000003E0 0E 0E 5A 09 64 F8 06 93 19 47 B2 CE AF 69 00 0B  ..Z.dø.".G`î i..
000003F0 A6 20 03 E7 79 0C OD AC FD 3B 98 6B DD 1B 90 BE  | .çy...ý;~kY..%
00000400 97 30 3B 44 D2 43 1D 0C 04 2D 34 74 8A F8 6E FD  -0;DÖC...-4tŠeny
00000410 48 19 DF AE 9E 74 A0 F7 B5 8B CF 8C 8C 44 8E 9E  H.šøžt ±µ< iØEDžž
00000420 EA 70 EE 36 75 80 A0 2D DD F6 BB B2 CA 05 BB 03  èpi6u€ -Yö»²È.»
00000430 A4 F2 A0 78 13 35 89 95 EF 6F 86 26 99 F3 66 9F  hò x.5%·io+æ™ófy
00000440 FE 7F BE 14 28 20 90 F9 5C 28 B2 0C 7F 63 38 5B  p.%.(.ù{(.c8[
00000450 F0 5F 03 98 7D F8 87 75 9A 23 EA 3A CD 75 94 18  ð .")ø+uš#è:íu".
00000460 55 C3 61 9A F8 5C 69 94 AD 1A E7 69 5B 02 9A F5  UÅašø\i"...çi[.šö
00000470 53 B3 D0 F0 34 0F C9 F2 76 57 A8 66 B6 17 AA E5  S²Đ84.ÈòvW`fq.²ã
00000480 6F 29 3E DE 02 60 0A 5C A6 19 37 D7 E7 45 B1 CE  o)>P..%\|.7×çE±î
00000490 76 DC E4 DC DA 2B 9A 1D 16 A3 CC AE E6 64 0B B0  vÜäÜÜ+š...èiøæd.°
000004A0 BD 2C 27 E0 2B 17 13 88 6F 80 7E 1C 3F 66 9B 75  %;,'à+...`o€~.?f>u
000004B0 C0 0C 3F 9A 4C 6C 04 7B 1B 18 89 29 46 AD 25 DD  Å.?šLl.{(.%)F.²Y
000004C0 5D 60 EE 6A 89 9B E5 34 85 74 CB 67 87 79 3A F4  ] ijt%>ã4...tÈg+y:ó
000004D0 A7 85 FB AE F7 FB CA DC 5B F2 16 C0 4E 56 6E DB  $...úø÷úÈÜ[ð.ÀNVnÜ
000004E0 BE 49 98 4B 9D 85 6D 3C FC 3D 16 7F 00 00 01 00  %I`K...m<ú=.....
000004F0 19 47 B2 CE AF 69 00 0B 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00  .G`î
    
```

Figure 90

### Indicators of Compromise

**Pipe** \\.\pipe\\_\_rust\_anonymous\_pipe1\_\_.<Process ID>.<Random number> **BlackCat Ransom Note** RECOVER-uhwuvzu-FILES.txt **Files created** checkpoints-<Filename>.uhwuvzu RECOVER-uhwuvzu-FILES.txt.png

**Processes spawned** cmd.exe /c “wmic csproduct get UUID” cmd.exe /c “fsutil behavior set SymlinkEvaluation R2L:1” cmd.exe /c “fsutil behavior set SymlinkEvaluation R2R:1” cmd.exe /c “iisreset.exe /stop” cmd.exe /c “vssadmin.exe Delete Shadows /all /quiet” cmd.exe /c “wmic.exe Shadowcopy Delete” cmd.exe /c “bcdedit /set {default}” cmd.exe /c “bcdedit /set {default} recoveryenabled No” cmd.exe /c for /F “tokens=\*” %I in

```
('wevtutil.exe el') DO wevtutil.exe cl %1 cmd.exe /c "reg add  
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\LanmanServer\Parameters /v MaxMpxCt /d  
65535 /t REG_DWORD /f" cmd.exe /c "arp -a"
```

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Source: <https://securityscorecard.com/research/deep-dive-into-alphv-blackcat-ransomware>