## Locate Vulnerabilities of Ethereum Smart Contracts with Semi-Automated Analysis

sphuke.

2023

Boik Su Senior security researcher, CyCraft



#### Boik Su

- Senior Security Researcher @ CyCraft
- CHROOT's member, a local hacker group in Taiwan
- Specialization
  - Web Security / AD Security / Blockchain Security
- Gives talks at
  - o OWASP Global AppSec / ROOTCON / HITCON









- Intro to Blockchain & Web3
- EVM-based Smart Contract Basics
- Reverse Engineering & CFG
- Cases & Futures









#### • Intro to Blockchain & Web3

- EVM-based Smart Contract Basics
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#### Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT)

- "Bitcoin", the first cryptocurrency, was invented in 2008 by an unknown person or group of people using the name **Satoshi Nakamoto**
- The term "Blockchain" was later invented due to the release of the white paper and its fundamental cores,
   Peer-to-Peer Network and Consensus Algorithm
- "DLT" is later named as a category that covers technologies like Blockchain, having high levels of transparency, integrity and availability in a decentralized framework



#### Peer-to-Peer Network

- Web 2.0, known as Social Network, focuses on sharing data and contents under famous entities such as Google, Meta, Apple, ...
- Web3, known as Blockchain-empowered Network, focuses on the controls of owned data and identities







#### **Consensus Algorithm**

- The most important component of a blockchain that ensures the safety of the network
- Participants need to fulfill certain requirements to make a transaction
- The mainstream ones
  - o PoW (Proof-of-Work)
  - o PoS (Proof-of-Stake)
  - PoH (Proof-of-History)







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  - o PoS (Proof-of-Stake)
  - PoH (Proof-of-History)





#### How does "blockchain" work?



#### How does the "network" look like?





#### Generations

- 1st Gen: Bitcoin blockchain (Payment System)
- 2nd Gen: Ethereum blockchain (On-chain traditional finance)
- Next Gen?
  - IoT (Internet of Things)
  - AI (Artificial Intelligence)







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- 1st Gen: Bitcoin blockchain (Payment System)
- 2nd Gen: Ethereum blockchain (On-chain traditional finance)
- Next Gen?
  - IoT (Internet of Things)
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  - Superconductor (?









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#### Ethereum blockchain & Smart Contract

- Ethereum blockchain introduces a new function called "Smart Contract", which is simply a program run on the blockchain
- Smart contracts can define rules, like a regular contract, and automatically enforce them via the code
- **Dapps** (Decentralized Apps) have their backend code (smart contracts) running on a blockchain like Ethereum to ensure decentralization and availability
  - "DeFi (Decentralized Finance)" then starts thriving



#### Ethereum VM (Virtual Machine)

- Smart contracts run on **EVM** (Ethereum VM)
- The EVM executes as a **stack machine**, and each compiled smart contract bytecode executes as a series of EVM opcodes like XOR, AND, ADD, SUB, etc
- Each EVM opcode is 1-byte, and therefore, we can have 256 different opcodes at maximum (142 currently)
- Each programmable computation is intrinsically bounded by **fees**, which is **a specific amount of gas**





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#### Hacks in Web3





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### Hacks in Web3 (Front-End)



It's Web 2.0 things...



4/18/22

Palisade identifies Wormable Cross-Site Scripting Vulnerability affecting Rarible's NFT Marketplace Ethereum Mainne



New address detected! address book.	Click here to add to your
https://rtfktnike.xyz <b>0xC9aa152</b> : CLAIM REWARDS <b>●</b> <b>◆</b> 0.11637182 ETH \$146.98	
DETAILS DATA HEX	
	EDIT
Estimated gas 🚯	\$1.34 0.001061 ETH
Site suggested Very likely in < 15 seconds	Max 0.00106077 ETH
	<u></u>

0xC9a...a152



4/18/22

Palisade identifies Wormable Cross-Site Scripting Vulnerability affecting Rarible's NFT Marketplace



649

Curve Finance SS (Cross-Site Scripting)

Don't use the frontend yet. Investigating!

@CurveFinance frontend is compromised, do not use it until further notice!

**Read 70 replies** 

4:40 AM · Aug 10, 2022

Signing your Request.



0xC9a...a152 : CLAIM REWARDS 6

\$148.32

21



Palisade identifies Wormable Cross-Site Scripting Vulnerability affecting Rarible's NFT Marketplace 0xC9a...a152

**Curve Finance** @CurveFinance · Follow Don't use the frontend yet. Investigating! 0xC9a...a152 : CLAIM REWARDS ( 💧 🌢 0.11637182 ETH 🥷 samczsun is occasionally shitposting 🔗 @samczsun \* \* \* DNS Cache Spoofing @CurveFinance frontend is compromised, do not use it until further notice! Estimated gas fee 4:40 AM · Aug 10, 2022 <u>ැ</u> Copy link 649 Reply **Read 70 replies** 

\$1.34 0.001061 ETH

Max 0.00106077 ETH

\$148.32



Palisade identifies Wormable	e Cross-Site Scripting
Vulnerability affecting Raribl	
	New address detected! Click here to add to your address book.
©CurveFinance · Follow	https://rtfktnike.xyz
Image: Section of the interview of the inte	<b>Spoor 2 6</b> 0.11637182 ETH s146.98
CurveFinance frontend is compromised, do not use it until further     patient	DETAILS DATA HEX Signing your Request EDI
4:40 AM - Aug 10 2022	Estimated gas \$1.34 0.001061 ETI fee
649 Reply 2 Copy link	Very likely in <15 feet seconds

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## Hacks in Web3 (Back-End)



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## Hacks in Web3 (Back-End)

# UNISWAP BUG BOUNTY

Uniswap Labs recently advertised a boosted \$3M bounty program for bug reports. To our

knowledge, ours was the only bug report that Uniswap acted upon.



@harmonyprotocol · Follow

1/ The Harmony team has identified a theft occurring this morning on the Horizon bridge amounting to approx. \$100MM. We have begun working with national authorities and forensic specialists to identify the culprit and retrieve the stolen funds.



7:13 AM · Jun 24, 2022



Wormhole 🌹 📀 @wormholecrypto · Follow

The wormhole network was exploited for 120k wETH.

ETH will be added over the next hours to ensure wETH is backed 1:1. More details to come shortly.

We are working to get the network back up guickly. Thanks for your patience.

6:25 AM · Feb 3, 2022

 $(\hat{})$ 



## Hacks in Web3 (Back-End)

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#### Hacks in Web3 (Back-End)







#### Reverse Engineering a Contract

- Everything uploaded on the blockchain is **consistent**, **verifiable**, and publicly **available**
- For transparency and reputation, some projects will disclose their source code on **GitHub**, **Etherscan**, etc
- If you want, you can always get a copy of a smart contract bytecode even if it's not open-sourced
- There are **no secrets** on the blockchain...



• Which means that we have the source code

function allowListMint(uint256 quantity, bytes32[] calldata proof) external pavable callerIsUser uint256 price = uint256(saleConfig.mintlistPrice); require(price != 0, "pre sale has not begun yet"); require( allowlist[msg.sender] < 1, "You can only mint once during pre-sale." ): bytes32 leaf = keccak256(abi.encodePacked(msg.sender)); require(\_verify(leaf, proof), "Invalid Signature proof supplied."); require(totalSupply() + quantity <= collectionSize, "reached max supply");</pre> require(price <= msg.value, "Invalid funds provided");</pre> allowlist[msg.sender]++; \_safeMint(msg.sender, quantity); refundIfOver(price);



- Which means that we have the source code
- We can take advantage of staticanalysis tools to easily discover flaws

```
function allowListMint(uint256 quantity, bytes32[] calldata proof)
  external
 pavable
  callerIsUser
 uint256 price = uint256(saleConfig.mintlistPrice);
  require(price != 0, "pre sale has not begun yet");
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 allowlist[msg.sender]++;
 _safeMint(msg.sender, quantity);
  refundIfOver(price);
```



- Which means that we have the source code
- We can take advantage of staticanalysis tools to easily discover flaws
- Can you spot the vuln?

function allowListMint(uint256 quantity, bytes32[] calldata proof)
 external
 payable
 callerIsUser
{
 uint256 price = uint256(saleConfig.mintlistPrice);

```
require(price != 0, "pre sale has not begun yet");
require(
```

```
allowlist[msg.sender] < 1,</pre>
```

```
"You can only mint once during pre-sale."
```

```
);
```

bytes32 leaf = keccak256(abi.encodePacked(msg.sender)); require(\_verify(leaf, proof), "Invalid Signature proof supplied."); require(totalSupply() + quantity <= collectionSize, "reached max supply"); require(price <= msg.value, "Invalid funds provided"); allowlist[msg.sender]++; \_safeMint(msg.sender, quantity); refundIfOver(price);



- Which means that we have the source code
- We can take advantage of staticanalysis tools to easily discover flaws
- You can mint as many items as you want by paying only the price of one item

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function allowListMint(uint256 quantity, bytes32[] calldata proof)
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 _safeMint(msg.sender, guantity);
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```

#### White Box Te<del>s</del>

- Which means that we have the code
  - We contract advanta analysis to easily discove

 You can mint as items as you want paying only the price of one item



uint256 quantity, bytes32[] calldata proof)

quantity);

nder



## Black Box Testing

- You can try "Replay Attack", which simply means you replay the Tx to see if you're able to reproduce the outcome
- Some will also analyze transactions to understand internal operations



#### Call Trace

 [call][231631] 0x000007370AF0000aD00Be0EFD [call][4786][@] [Isekai Meta: ISEKAI Toke [staticcall][2534][@] [Wrapped Ether].bai
 [call][111479][@] [Seaport: Seaport vl.1 [log] OrderFulfilled(topic\_0=0x9d9af8e3



## Black Box Testing

- You can try "Replay Attack", which simply means you replay the Tx to see if you're able to reproduce the outcome
- Some will also analyze **Txs** to understand internal operations
- Or, you can **reverse** smart contracts, and it will give you a much clearer view of what smart contracts do actually



#### Disassembly

• No matter what compiled binaries we have, it's a must to firstly disassemble machine code into disassembly



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- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics

	B1	ENTER
w = 0;	w = 0;	entert
x = x + y;	x = x + y;	
y = 0;	y = 0;	*
if(x > z)	if(x > z)	B1
{	B2	
$y - x_j$	y = x;	¥ 4
1	x++;	BZ B3
else	B3	
{	y = z;	B4
$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{z};$	z++;	54
}	B4	Ļ
w = x + z;	w = x + z;	EXIT
Source Code	Basic Blocks	Flow Graph

L1:	MOV	EAX, \$2		
L2:	MUL	EAX, EC	Х	
L3:	MOV	DWORD [	0x402000],	EAX



- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics

	B1	ENTER
w = 0;	w = 0;	ENTER
$\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y};$	x = x + y;	
y = 0;	y = 0;	¥
if(x > z)	if(x > z)	B1
{	B2	
y = x;	y = x;	¥ 4
1	x++;	B2 B3
else	B3	
{	$\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{z}$	
$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{z};$	z++;	B4
}	B4	Ļ
w = x + z;	w = x + z;	EXIT
Source Code	Basic Blocks	Flow Graph

L1:	MOV	EAX, \$2	
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  - 1. To have correct executing logics







#### B1 ENTER w = 0; w = 0; x = x + y;y = 0;B1 if(x > z)if(x > z)B2 Y = x: y = x;\*++ \* B2 B3 x++; **B**3 else

**B**4

EXIT

Flow Graph

y = z;

w = x + z;

**Basic Blocks** 

z++;

**B**4

y = z;

= x + z;

Source Code

z++;

- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics

L0:	MOV	EAX, \$3
	CMP	EBX, \$0
	JNE	L2
L1:	MOV	EAX, \$2
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- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics

L0:	MOV	EAX.	\$3	
	CMP	FBX.	\$0	
		12	ΨŪ	
11.	MOV		¢0	
	MUU	EAX,	<b></b> <b>Σ</b> <b>Σ</b> <b>Σ</b> <b>Σ</b>	
LZ:	MUL	EAX,	ECX	
L3:	MOV	DWORD	) [0x402000],	EA>

 $= \frac{1}{6} \frac{1}{2} \frac{$ 

ECX



- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - To have correct executing logics 1.
  - 2. To eliminate loops









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- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics
  - 2. To eliminate loops
  - 3. To transform into SSA form and lift to a higher-level abstraction





- Why do we need to construct a CFG
  - 1. To have correct executing logics
  - 2. To eliminate loops
  - 3. To transform into SSA form and lift to a higher-level abstraction
- Okay, then how do we get our hands dirty in making a CFG?
- To make it easy, **intermediate-language-based analysis** could make it easy for us (**BNIL**, **P-Code**, **Microcode**, **AIL**)





Ethereum Bytecode • Linear • Low Level IL •

1 This function has been analyzed with basic analysis only. Enable full analysis of this function.

	0	000000000	push(0x430504000000eb)
	@	00000021	push(pop == 0)
2	6	00000022	push(0x45)
3	0	00000024	temp0.32 = pop
4	6	00000024	$temp0.32 = 0 \times 45$
	6	00000024	jump(temp0.32 => 6 @ 0x46)
	0	00000046	push(0x2c20776f726c640a)
	6	00000054	push(0)
8	6	00000055	temp0.32 = pop
	0	00000055	temp0.32 = 0
10	6	00000055	temp1.32 = pop
11	6	00000055	temp1.32 = 0x2c20776f726c64
12	0	00000055	[temp0.32].32 = temp1.32
13	6	00000056	push(0xc)
14	6	00000058	push(0x13)
15	@	0000005a	<return> jump(pop)</return>

00000025

00 00 00-00 00 20 00 01 00 00 00-00 00 00 00 00 00 00 b9-47 00 43 05 b2 0d cd 80 .....G.C....

00000040 34 0d 93 cd 80



• To guide BN to construct a CFG from an unknown architecture, we firstly need to convert the machine code to the disassembly

EVM Playground	GRAYGLACIER		Bytecode 🗸	🕒 Curre	ent: 3 Total: 2100	)	€ ⊙
7f454c460100000000	00000000004305020003	001a0043051a00430504000	000eb1560455600	[00]	PUSH32	454c4601000000000000000	00004305020003001a0043051a
2c20776f726c640a3d5	52600c6013f3	004303020020020003400932000	050000805000001				
00000000 in 🔥 This functio	t256_t _dispatche on has been analyzed	er() with basic analysis only.	Enable full analys	sis of this	function.		
0000000 7f		PUSH32 #454c460100	000000000000000000000000000000000000000	00043050	20003001a00430	051a00430504000000eb	
00000021 15		ISZERO					
00000022 60	45	PUSH1 #45					
00000024 56		JUMP					5



• Secondly, we need to tell BN when to branch out, and therefore, BN will construct the CFG for us







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  - Having said that, branches information are sometimes hard to be deduced







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  - VSA (Value Set Analysis) is a static analysis approach that finds an over-approximation of the values that a location could take at a given program point
  - This can be used to understand the possible targets of indirect jumps, or the possible targets of memory / register write operations



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  - This can be used to understand the possible targets of indirect jumps, or the possible targets of memory / register write operations
  - Though it suffers from a lack of accuracy, it's sound



- Secondly, we need to tell BN when to branch out, and therefore, BN will construct the CFG for us
  - Due to the introduction of the "Gas", we can simulate every execution steps of smart contracts
  - We set an upper bound of the remaining amount of the gas, there will be no infinite steps to follow, or issues like DoS (Denial of Service)



- Secondly, we need to tell BN when to branch out, and therefore, BN will construct the CFG for us
  - Due to the introduction of the "Gas", we can simulate every execution steps of smart contracts
  - We set an upper bound of the remaining amount of the gas, there will be no infinite steps to follow, or issues like DoS (Denial of Service)
  - We can now get accurate values that a location could take at a given program point of stacks / memories / and built-in functions



#### Thanks to **EthereumJS Monorepo**



JS

```
if (instruction.name === 'JUMPI' && stack.length >= 2) {
    branch.nextPc = (stack[1] > 0) ? branch.falseBranch : branch.trueBranch;
```

```
return branch;
```

```
if (instruction.name === 'JUMP' && stack.length >= 1) {
```

```
if (this.jumpTable.hasOwnProperty(instruction.pc)) {
```

```
this.jumpTable[instruction.pc].instructions.push(branch.instruction);
```

```
this.jumpTable[instruction.pc].trueBranches.push(branch.trueBranch);
```

} else {

this.jumpTable[instruction.pc] = { instructions: [instruction], trueBranches: [branch.trueBranch] };



[00]	PUSH32	454c4601
[21]	ISZER0	
[22]	PUSH1	45
[24]	JUMP	
[25]	STOP	
[26]	STOP	
[27]	STOP	
STACK		
45		
0		





// Now, we get the interpreter
this.interpreter = new Interpreter((await this.startExecution(value, data)).interpreter);

// start!

```
this.round += 1;
this.interpreter.reset(this.gasLimit);
await this.interpreter.run();
```

```
while (grey.length) {
    const branch = grey.shift();
```

```
this.round += 1;
this.interpreter.reset(this.gasLimit);
await this.interpreter.run(branch);
```

#### bb.walked = true;

// get the branch that won't follow this time const branch = getBranch.call(this, this.instructions[pc], stack);

#### if (branch) {

branch.runState.rawMemory = Buffer.from(this.interpreter.\_interpreter.\_runState.memory.\_store); branch.runState.rawStack = Array.from(this.interpreter.\_interpreter.\_runState.stack.\_store); branch.runState.rawStack.pop(); branch.runState.rawStack.pop(); grey.unshift(branch);







<pre>const funcPc = (bb.funcSig) ? ((branch) ? branch.trueBranch : parseInt(stack[0], 16)) : null;</pre>	null,
	null,
<pre>// if we just found a possible function signature, we label the function</pre>	null,
if (funcPc) {	null,
<pre>this.add_function({ pc: funcPc, name: bb.funcSig });</pre>	null,
	"0×0"





- Finally, we give BN these pieces of information via its APIs
  - get\_instruction\_text
    - A list of InstructionTextToken objects for the instruction at the given virtual address with data
  - get\_instruction\_info
    - An InstructionInfo object for the instruction at the given virtual address with data
  - $\circ \quad \texttt{get\_instruction\_low\_level\_il}$ 
    - Appends LowLevelILExpr objects to the il variable for the instruction at the given virtual address with data





# **BINARYNINJA**

#### Recent

1: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/elf.evm

2: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0xa019c785322b921a84d086502da0d0dbdb993fba.evm

3: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x253ef258563E146f685e60219DA56a6b75178E19.evm

4: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0xE7145dd6287AE53326347f3A6694fCf2954bcD8A.evm

5: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x1278fb63b150e1c9cc478824e589045729321c54.evm

6: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x61EB5a27E5f79d182fAFA702c509e017c48821Ed.evm

7: /Applications/Mimestream.app/Contents/MacOS/Mimestream

/Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x4d5ad9198f71f23bd002ef8445a1a8cf2932c744.evm
 /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x76E2cFc1F5Fa8F6a5b3fC4c8F4788F0116861F9B.evm
 /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x037520c021706e73aa54d81c14808343962770a1.evm

Open... Open an existing file.

ptions... Open an existing file with custom options.

Create a new binary file.

Triage Onen file(s) for quick analysis in the Triage Summary view

#### **The Bytes Must Flow!**

#### Binary Ninja 3.3 (Arrakis) is now available.

You may have noticed that we've introduced a new set of codenames for upcoming releases based on an alphabetical list of famous Sci-FI/Fantasy planets. Our first release in this theme is named after the famous desert planet from Dune, Arrakis.

So what spicy goodies are in this release?

- o Decompiler Improvements
  - o Parameter Rejection
  - Improved Objective-C Support
  - Automatic Outlining

ം Debugger

- ୦ Type Interactions
  - Create Array Dialog
  - Import / Export Header Files
  - Enumeration Dialog
- More Windows Improvements





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#### • <u>SAG</u>? from DEF CON 2018 Quals

• It gives us a proxy contract

#### contract SagProxy {

....event PrizeRequest(bytes32 msgHash, uint8 v, bytes32 r, bytes32 s);

....event PrizeReady(address winner, bytes prize);

····Sag·<mark>private</mark> sag;

...address private owner;







#### • <u>SAG</u>? from DEF CON 2018 Quals

• It gives us a proxy contract to interact with the private contract behind

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58b0f492ac22be013a619afc0486aaa433dad38d928098dabe86573 2602001836000191660001916815260200182600019166000191683 05b9493505050505600a165627a7a72305820563788b2b3c0a02893 000000000000000a019c785322b921a84d086502da0d0dbdb993fba





#### • <u>SAG</u>? from DEF CON 2018 Quals

• It gives us a proxy contract to interact with the private contract behind

#### • All we know is to pass the function: gamble(guess, seed)

```
function gamble(uint256 guess, uint256 seed) public
....{
.....sag.gamble(guess, seed);
....}
```







#### • <u>SAG</u>? from DEF CON 2018 Quals

- It gives us a proxy contract to interact with the private contract behind
- All we know is to pass the function: gamble(guess, seed)
- Then, we request the prize



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- It gives us a proxy contract to interact with the private contract behind
- All we know is to pass the function: gamble(guess, seed)
- Then, we request the prize
- The <u>Sag</u> contract isn't published and verified, so we reverse it







#### New Tab $\, imes\,$



#### Recent

1: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0xa019c785322b921a84d086502da0d0dbdb993fba.evm 2: /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/elf.evm

3: /Users/bolk/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x253ef258563E146f685e60219DA56a6b75178E19.evm 4: /Users/bolk/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0xE7145dd6287AE53326347f3A6694fCf2954bcD8A.evm 5: /Users/bolk/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x1278fb63b150e1c9cc478824e589045729321c54.evm 6: /Users/bolk/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x161B5a27E5f79d182fAFA702c509e017c48821Ed.evm 7: /Applications/Mimestream.app/Contents/MacOS/Mimestream

/Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x4d5ad9198f71f23bd002ef8445a1a8cf2932c744.evm
 /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x76E2cFc1F5Fa8F6a5b3fC4c8F4788F0116861F9B.evm
 /Users/boik/Documents/blockchain/eth/contracts/0x037520c021706e73aa54d81c14808343962770a1.evm

Open... Open an existing file.

options... Open an existing file with custom options.

Open file(s) for quick analysis in the Triage Summary view

New Create a new binary file.



- To-dos in the future
  - Make it more "smart-contract-like" in decompilation, not c-like
  - Have a plugin like IDA F.L.I.R.T. Technology
    - Fast Library Identification and Recognition Technology
  - Best-effort to decode the 4-byte signatures







#### References

- <u>REVERSE ENGINEERING A CONTRACT</u>
- Decompiler how to structure loops
- <u>CS153: Compilers Lecture 23: Static Single Assignment</u> <u>Form</u>
- crytic/ethersplay






## THANKHAVE<br/>QUESTIONS?YOU!HAVE<br/>QUESTIONS?



