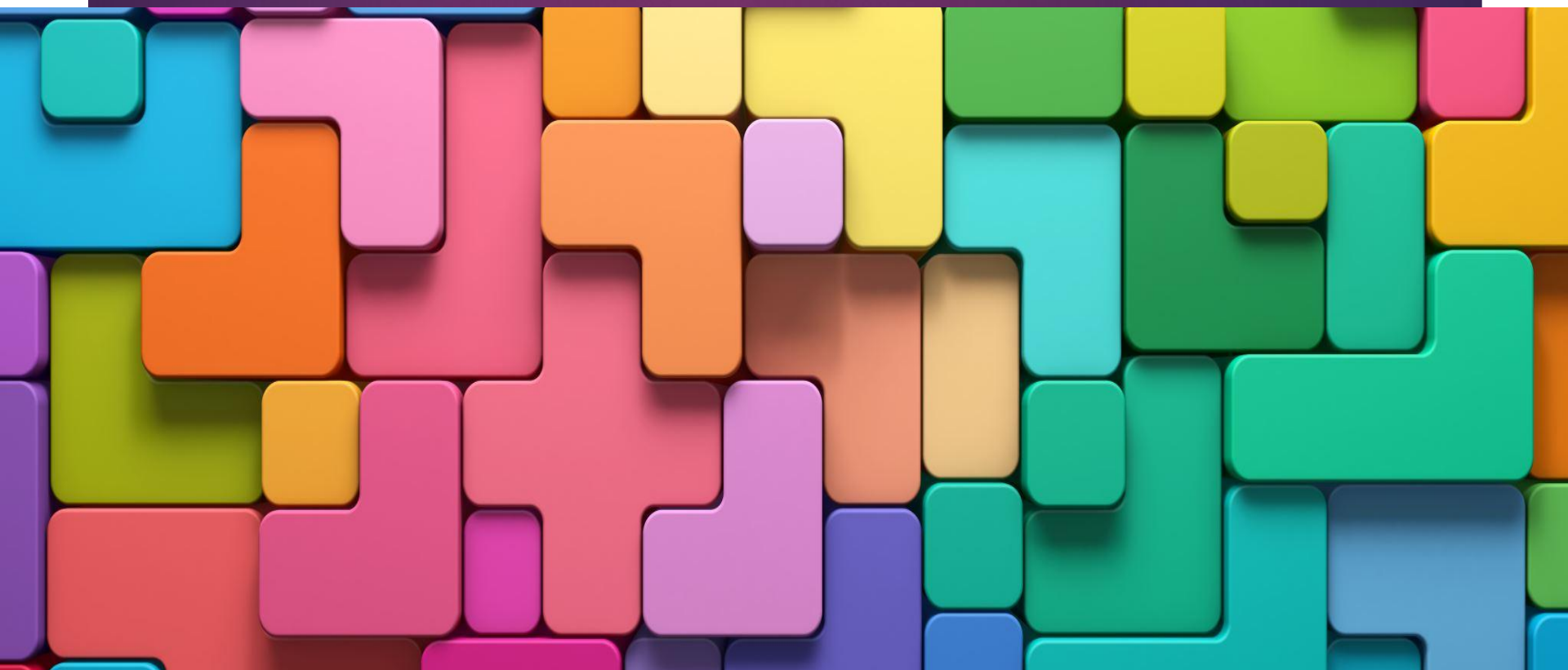


THE HONEYPOT

COWRIE RUNNING ON UBUNTU/PYTHON3

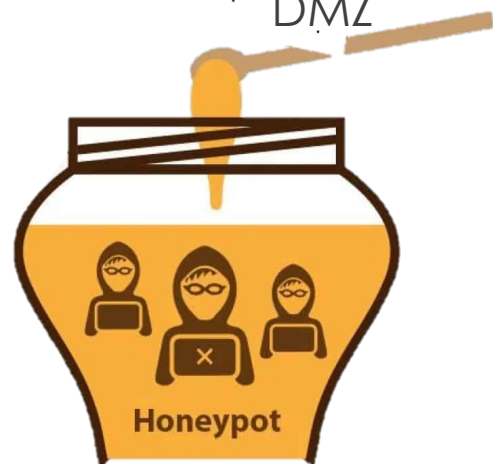
JOSHUA BRISSON, AARON MCCAMMENT

CS 4910

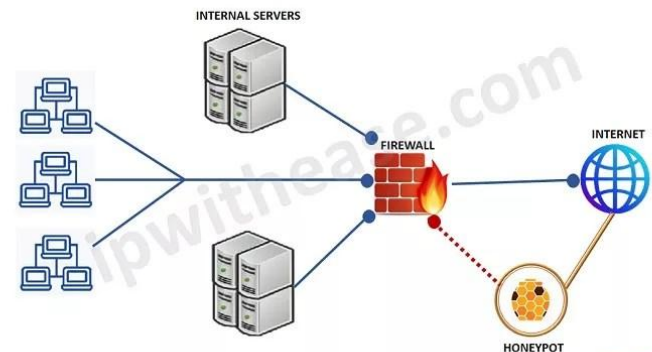


What is a honeypot?

- ▶ A fake system designed to attract malicious attackers
- ▶ Logs everything a user does (IMPORTANT!)
- ▶ Needs to be believable, so takes some effort to appear legit
- ▶ Needs to be safe to exploit, so run on a system in DMZ

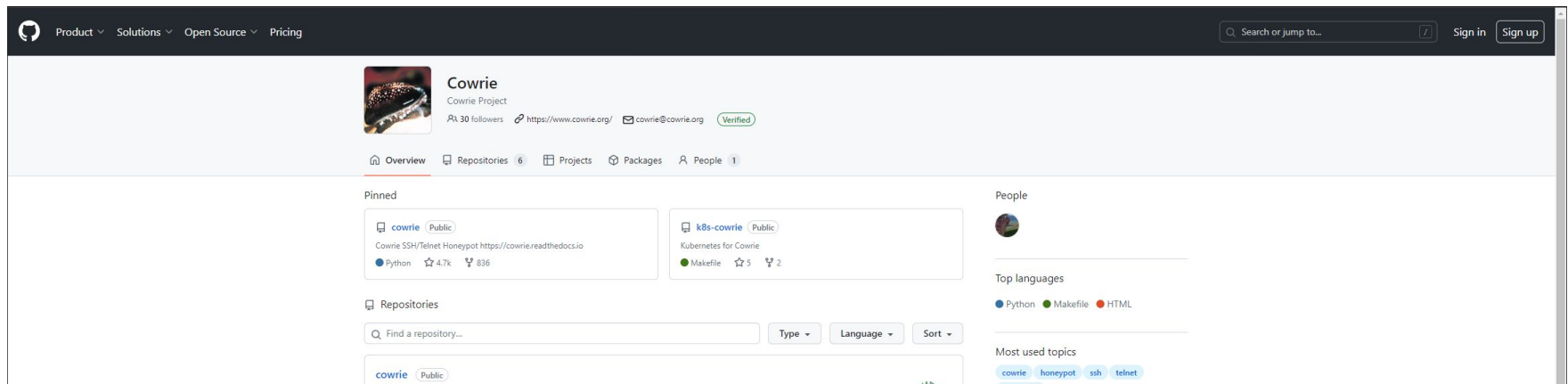


Honeypot Placed in-between Firewall & Internet



COWRIE: A Prime Example (because free and useful)

- ▶ For this project we used 'cowrie':
<https://github.com/cowrie/cowrie>
- ▶ Python3 script, ran in a virtual environment, simulates an entire host system
- ▶ We ran on Ubuntu (ver 18+), via Oracle VM (**AVOID CentOS!** Need Python3.8+)



The screenshot shows the GitHub profile page for the 'Cowrie' project. The profile header includes the project name 'Cowrie', the description 'Cowrie Project', 30 followers, the website 'https://www.cowrie.org/', the email 'cowrie@cowrie.org', and a 'Verified' badge. Below the header, there are tabs for 'Overview', 'Repositories' (6), 'Projects', 'Packages', and 'People' (1). The 'Pinned' section displays two repositories: 'cowrie' (Public) with 4.7k stars and 836 forks, and 'k8s-cowrie' (Public) with 5 stars and 2 forks. The 'Repositories' section is visible below, showing a search bar and filters for 'Type', 'Language', and 'Sort'. The 'People' section on the right shows a profile picture and 'Top languages' (Python, Makefile, HTML) and 'Most used topics' (cowrie, honeypot, ssh, telnet).

The DEMO

```
Nov 15 11:21
root@Ubuntu22: /home

bigmac@svr04:/etc$ rm passwd
bigmac@svr04:/etc$ ls
X11
bash.bashrc
calendar
cron.monthly
default
discover.conf.d
environment
group
host.conf
init
insserv
issue
ld.so.cache
locale.gen
logrotate.d
manpath.config
modprobe.d
network
os-release
profile.d
rc0.d
rc5.d
rpc
selinux
skel
systemd
ufw
vim
acpi
bash_completion.d
console-setup
cron.weekly
deluser.conf
dkms
fstab
group-
hostname
init.d
insserv.conf
issue.net
ld.so.conf
localtime
magic
menu
modules
networks
pam.conf
protocols
rc1.d
rc6.d
rsyslog.conf
services
ssh
terminfo
vim
adduser.conf
bindresvport.blacklist
cron.d
crontab
dhcp
dpkg
fstab.d
grub.d
hosts
initramfs-tools
insserv.conf.d
kbd
ld.so.conf.d
logcheck
magic.mime
menu-methods
motd
nologin
pam.d
python
rc2.d
rc3.d
rc5.d
rsyslog.d
shadow
staff-group-for-usr-local
timezone
wgetrc
alternatives
blkid.tab
cron.daily
debconf.conf
dictionaries-common
drirc
gai.conf
gshadow
hosts.allow
inittab
iproute2
kernel
libaudit.conf
login.defs
mailcap
mime.types
mtab
nsswitch.conf
passwd-
python2.7
rc2.d
rc3.d
resolv.conf
securetty
shadow-
sysctl.conf
ucf.conf
apt
blkid.tab.old
cron.hourly
debian_version
discover-modprobe.conf
emacs
groff
gshadow-
hosts.deny
inputrc
iscsi
kernel-img.conf
locale.alias
logrotate.conf
mailcap.order
mke2fs.conf
nanorc
opt
profile
rc.local
rc4.d
rmt
security
shells
sysctl.d
udev

2023-11-15T11:20:33.393834Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: clear
2023-11-15T11:20:37.662071Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:20:37.662433Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:20:39.796781Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:20:39.797135Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:20:44.859109Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: rm passwd
2023-11-15T11:20:44.859921Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: rm passwd
2023-11-15T11:21:04.133075Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:21:04.133505Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
```

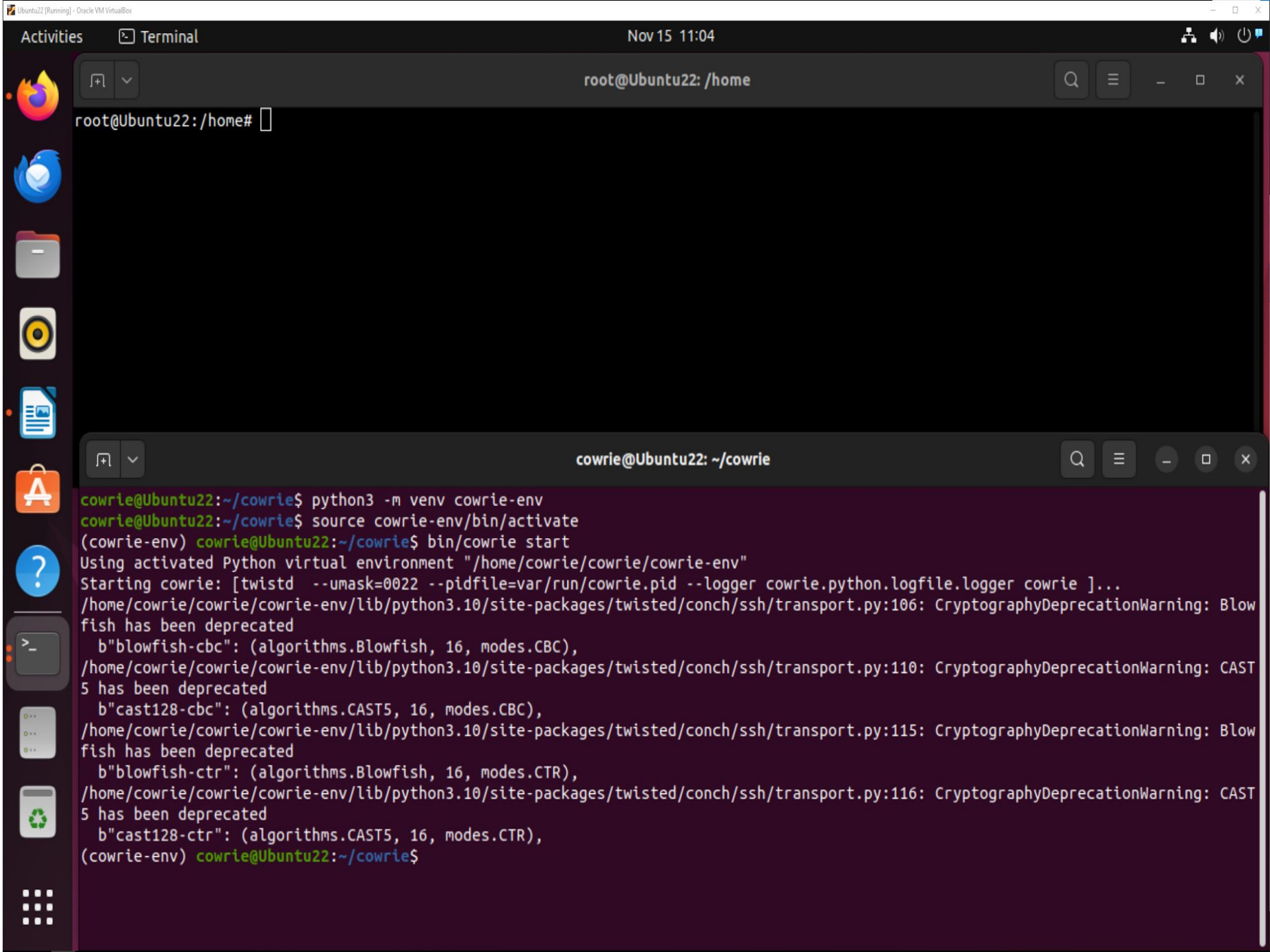
root@Ubuntu22: /home

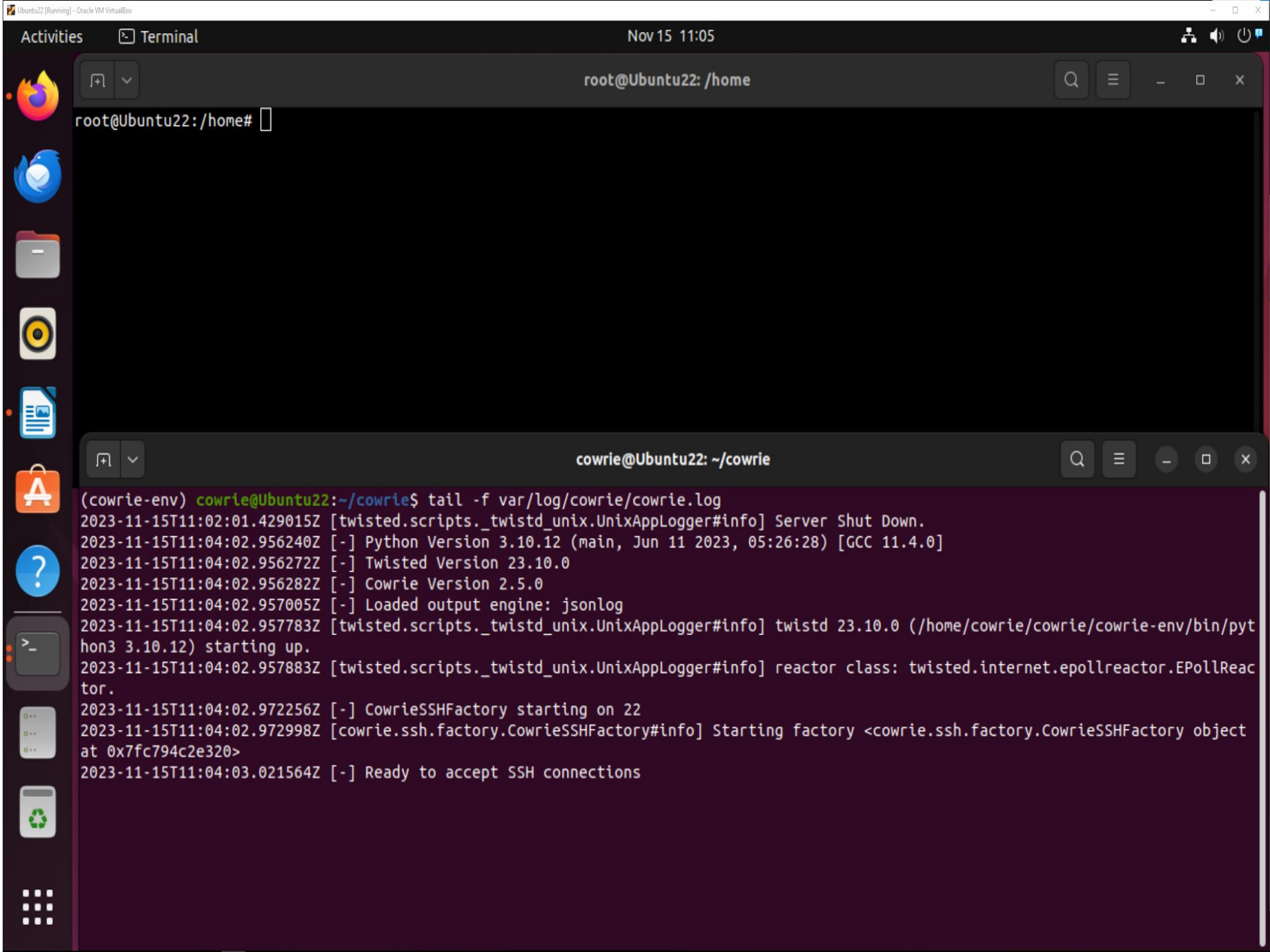
```
root@Ubuntu22:/home#
```

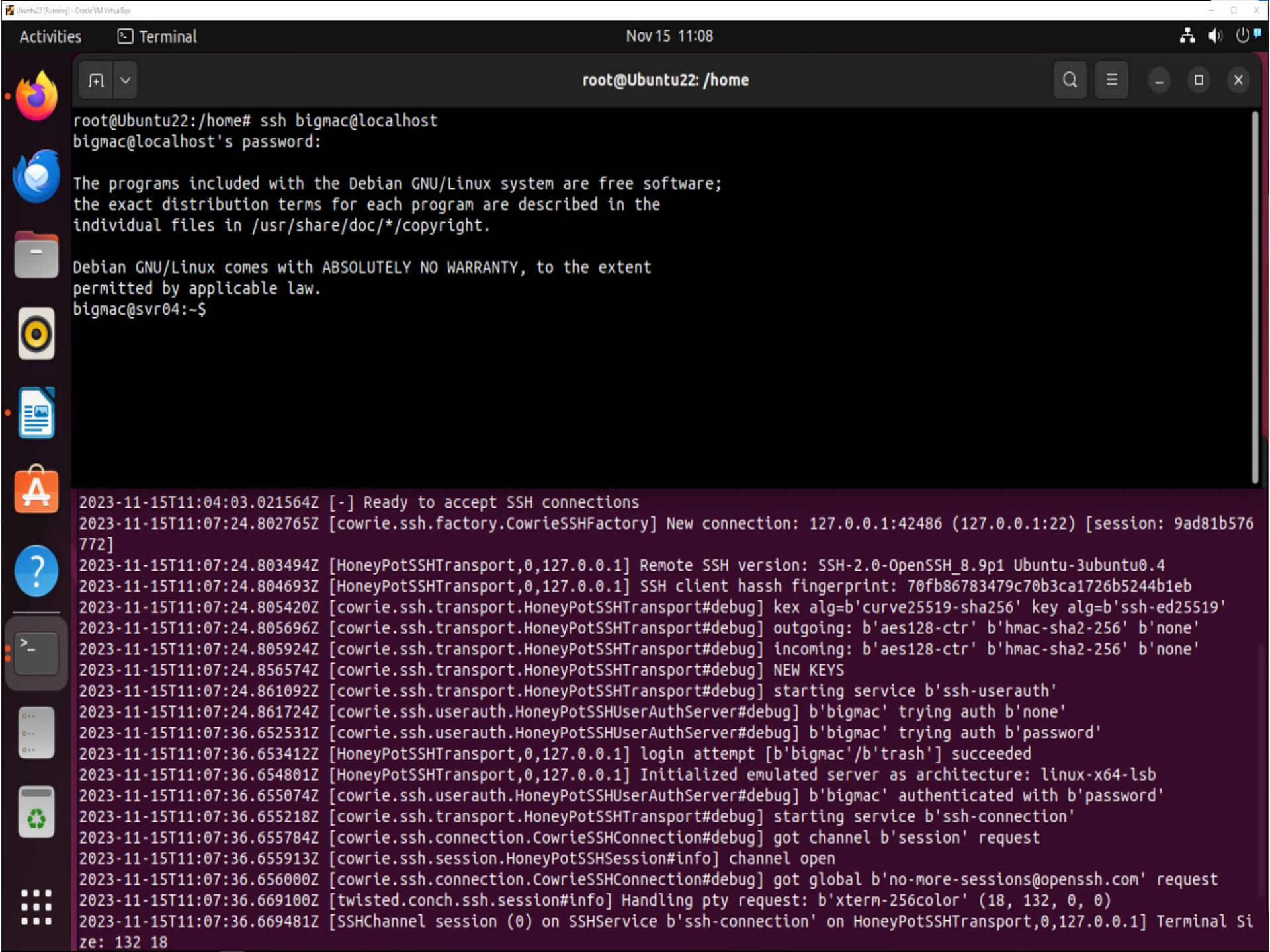


root@Ubuntu22: /home/cowrie/cowrie

```
root@Ubuntu22:/home/cowrie/cowrie# ls
bin          cowrie-env  etc          LICENSE.rst  pyproject.toml  requirements-output.txt  setup.py  tox.ini
CHANGELOG.rst  docker     honeyfs      Makefile     README.rst      requirements.txt         share     var
CONTRIBUTING.rst  docs      INSTALL.rst  MANIFEST.in  requirements-dev.txt  setup.cfg               src
root@Ubuntu22:/home/cowrie/cowrie# ls honeyfs
etc  proc
root@Ubuntu22:/home/cowrie/cowrie# ls honeyfs/etc
group  host.conf  hostname  hosts  inittab  issue  motd  passwd  resolv.conf  shadow
root@Ubuntu22:/home/cowrie/cowrie#
```





```
root@Ubuntu22:/home# ssh bigmac@localhost
bigmac@localhost's password:
```

```
The programs included with the Debian GNU/Linux system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.
```

```
Debian GNU/Linux comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent
permitted by applicable law.
bigmac@svr04:~$
```

```
2023-11-15T11:04:03.021564Z [-] Ready to accept SSH connections
2023-11-15T11:07:24.802765Z [cowrie.ssh.factory.CowrieSSHFactory] New connection: 127.0.0.1:42486 (127.0.0.1:22) [session: 9ad81b576772]
2023-11-15T11:07:24.803494Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Remote SSH version: SSH-2.0-OpenSSH_8.9p1 Ubuntu-3ubuntu0.4
2023-11-15T11:07:24.804693Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] SSH client hassh fingerprint: 70fb86783479c70b3ca1726b5244b1eb
2023-11-15T11:07:24.805420Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] kex alg=b'curve25519-sha256' key alg=b'ssh-ed25519'
2023-11-15T11:07:24.805696Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] outgoing: b'aes128-ctr' b'hmac-sha2-256' b'none'
2023-11-15T11:07:24.805924Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] incoming: b'aes128-ctr' b'hmac-sha2-256' b'none'
2023-11-15T11:07:24.856574Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] NEW KEYS
2023-11-15T11:07:24.861092Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] starting service b'ssh-userauth'
2023-11-15T11:07:24.861724Z [cowrie.ssh.userauth.HoneyPotSSHUserAuthServer#debug] b'bigmac' trying auth b'none'
2023-11-15T11:07:36.652531Z [cowrie.ssh.userauth.HoneyPotSSHUserAuthServer#debug] b'bigmac' trying auth b'password'
2023-11-15T11:07:36.653412Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] login attempt [b'bigmac'/b'trash'] succeeded
2023-11-15T11:07:36.654801Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Initialized emulated server as architecture: linux-x64-lsb
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655074Z [cowrie.ssh.userauth.HoneyPotSSHUserAuthServer#debug] b'bigmac' authenticated with b'password'
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655218Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] starting service b'ssh-connection'
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655784Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#debug] got channel b'session' request
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655913Z [cowrie.ssh.session.HoneyPotSSHSession#info] channel open
2023-11-15T11:07:36.656000Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#debug] got global b'no-more-sessions@openssh.com' request
2023-11-15T11:07:36.669100Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] Handling pty request: b'xterm-256color' (18, 132, 0, 0)
2023-11-15T11:07:36.669481Z [SSHChannel session (0) on SSHService b'ssh-connection' on HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Terminal Size: 132 18
```


root@Ubuntu22: /home

```
root@Ubuntu22:/home# ssh bigmac@localhost
bigmac@localhost's password:
```

```
The programs included with the Debian GNU/Linux system are free software;
the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the
individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.
```

```
Debian GNU/Linux comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent
permitted by applicable law.
```

```
bigmac@svr04:~$ ls
```

```
bigmac@svr04:~$ vi
ustimed out waiting for input: auto-logout
```

```
Connection to localhost closed by remote host.
```

```
Connection to localhost closed.
```

```
root@Ubuntu22:/home#
```

```
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655218Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#debug] starting service b'ssh-connection'
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655784Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#debug] got channel b'session' request
2023-11-15T11:07:36.655913Z [cowrie.ssh.session.HoneyPotSSHSession#info] channel open
2023-11-15T11:07:36.656000Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#debug] got global b'no-more-sessions@openssh.com' request
2023-11-15T11:07:36.669100Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] Handling pty request: b'xterm-256color' (18, 132, 0, 0)
2023-11-15T11:07:36.669481Z [SSHChannel session (0) on SSHService b'ssh-connection' on HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Terminal Si
ze: 132 18
2023-11-15T11:07:36.670014Z [SSHChannel session (0) on SSHService b'ssh-connection' on HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] request_env
: LANG=en_US.UTF-8
2023-11-15T11:07:36.670403Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] Getting shell
2023-11-15T11:10:05.123218Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:10:05.123744Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:10:36.715957Z [-] Timeout reached in HoneyPotSSHTransport
2023-11-15T11:10:36.716380Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] exitCode: 1
2023-11-15T11:10:36.716487Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#debug] sending request b'exit-status'
2023-11-15T11:10:36.716719Z [-] Closing TTY Log: var/lib/cowrie/tty/0a6eec7caf403e8eec9631e00ff1391cea011886f925bf0b8e79e5f731a5ba2d
after 180 seconds
2023-11-15T11:10:36.716838Z [cowrie.ssh.connection.CowrieSSHConnection#info] sending close 0
2023-11-15T11:10:36.717064Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] avatar bigmac logging out
2023-11-15T11:10:36.717126Z [cowrie.ssh.transport.HoneyPotSSHTransport#info] connection lost
2023-11-15T11:10:36.717170Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,0,127.0.0.1] Connection lost after 191 seconds
```

the exact distribution terms for each program are described in the individual files in /usr/share/doc/*/copyright.

Debian GNU/Linux comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

bigmac@svr04:~\$ vi userdb.txt
E558: Terminal entry not found in terminfo
bigmac@svr04:~\$ touch userdb.txt
bigmac@svr04:~\$ ls

userdb.txt
bigmac@svr04:~\$ cd ..
bigmac@svr04:/home\$ ls
bigmac

bigmac@svr04:/home\$ cd ..
bigmac@svr04:/\$ ls
bin boot dev etc home initrd.img lib lost+found media mnt opt proc
root run sbin selinux srv sys test2 tmp usr var vmlinuz
bigmac@svr04:/\$

2023-11-15T11:11:25.339831Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] Handling pty request: b'xterm-256color' (18, 132, 0, 0)
2023-11-15T11:11:25.340052Z [SSHChannel session (0) on SSHService b'ssh-connection' on HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Terminal Size: 132 18
2023-11-15T11:11:25.340852Z [SSHChannel session (0) on SSHService b'ssh-connection' on HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] request_env : LANG=en_US.UTF-8
2023-11-15T11:11:25.341390Z [twisted.conch.ssh.session#info] Getting shell
2023-11-15T11:11:35.350589Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: vi userdb.txt
2023-11-15T11:11:35.351236Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: vi userdb.txt
2023-11-15T11:11:35.351442Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Reading txtcmd from "share/cowrie/txtcmds/usr/bin/vi"
2023-11-15T11:11:50.642628Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: touch userdb.txt
2023-11-15T11:11:50.643202Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: touch userdb.txt
2023-11-15T11:11:58.979297Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:11:58.979721Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:11.442755Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:11.443188Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:18.414021Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:18.414678Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:20.984344Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:20.984762Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:22.352596Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:22.353012Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls

root@Ubuntu22: /home



bigmac@svr04:/\$ cd etc

bigmac@svr04:/etc\$ ls

```

X11                acpi                adduser.conf       alternatives       apt
bash.bashrc        bash_completion.d bindresvport.blacklist blkid.tab          blkid.tab.old
calendar           console-setup      cron.d             cron.daily         cron.hourly
cron.monthly       cron.weekly       crontab           debconf.conf      debian_version
default            deluser.conf      dhcp              dictionaries-common discover-modprobe.conf
discover.conf.d    dkms              dpkg              drirc              emacs
environment        fstab            fstab.d          gai.conf          groff
group              group            grub.d           gshadow          gshadow-
host.conf          hostname         hosts            hosts.allow       hosts.deny
init               init.d           initramfs-tools  inittab          inputrc
insserv           insserv.conf     insserv.conf.d   iproute2         iscsi
issue             issue.net        kernel           kernel-img.conf  kernel-alias
ld.so.cache       ld.so.conf       ld.so.conf.d     libaudit.conf    logrotate.conf
locale.gen        localtime       logcheck         magic.mime       mailcap.order
logrotate.d       magic           menu             menu-methods    mime.types
manpath.config    modprobe.d      modules          motd             mtab
network          networks        nologin         nsswitch.conf   nsswitch.conf
os-release        pam.conf        pam.d           passwd          python
profile          profile.d       rc0.d           rc1.d            rc2.d
rc.local          rc4.d           rc5.d           rc6.d            rc5.d
rc4.d            rmt             rsyslog.conf    services         shadow
rmt              security        selinux         ssh              staff-group-for-usr-local
security         shells          skel            systemd         sysctl.conf
shells          sysctl.d        systemd         ufw             ufw
udev             udev           ufw             vim             wgetrc

```

bigmac@svr04:/etc\$

```

2023-11-15T11:12:18.414678Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:20.984344Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:20.984762Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd ..
2023-11-15T11:12:22.352596Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:12:22.353012Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:13:04.012774Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:13:04.013547Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:13:07.470488Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:13:07.470902Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,1,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls

```

root@Ubuntu22: /home



bigmac@svr04:/etc\$ rm passwd

bigmac@svr04:/etc\$ ls

X11	acpi	adduser.conf	alternatives	apt
bash.bashrc	bash_completion.d	bindresvport.blacklist	blkid.tab	blkid.tab.old
calendar	console-setup	cron.d	cron.daily	cron.hourly
cron.monthly	cron.weekly	crontab	debconf.conf	debian_version
default	deluser.conf	dhcp	dictionaries-common	discover-modprobe.conf
discover.conf.d	dkms	dpkg	drirc	emacs
environment	fstab	fstab.d	gai.conf	groff
group	group-	grub.d	gshadow	gshadow-
host.conf	hostname	hosts	hosts.allow	hosts.deny
init	init.d	initramfs-tools	inittab	inputrc
insserv	insserv.conf	insserv.conf.d	iproute2	iscsi
issue	issue.net	kbd	kernel	kernel-img.conf
ld.so.cache	ld.so.conf	ld.so.conf.d	libaudit.conf	locale.alias
locale.gen	localtime	logcheck	login.defs	logrotate.conf
logrotate.d	magic	magic.mime	mailcap	mailcap.order
manpath.config	menu	menu-methods	mime.types	mke2fs.conf
modprobe.d	modules	motd	mtab	nanorc
network	networks	nologin	nsswitch.conf	opt
os-release	pam.conf	pam.d	passwd-	profile
profile.d	protocols	python	python2.7	rc.local
rc0.d	rc1.d	rc2.d	rc3.d	rc4.d
rc5.d	rc6.d	rcS.d	resolv.conf	rmt
rpc	rsyslog.conf	rsyslog.d	securetty	security
selinux	services	shadow	shadow-	shells
skel	ssh	staff-group-for-usr-local	sysctl.conf	sysctl.d
systemd	terminfo	timezone	ucf.conf	udev
ufw	vim	wgetrc		

bigmac@svr04:/etc\$

```
2023-11-15T11:20:33.393834Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: clear
2023-11-15T11:20:37.662071Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:20:37.662433Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: cd etc
2023-11-15T11:20:39.796781Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:20:39.797135Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
2023-11-15T11:20:44.859109Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: rm passwd
2023-11-15T11:20:44.859921Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: rm passwd
2023-11-15T11:21:04.133075Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] CMD: ls
2023-11-15T11:21:04.133505Z [HoneyPotSSHTransport,2,127.0.0.1] Command found: ls
```


Additionally...

- ▶ Cowrie supports SFTP and SCP for file upload
- ▶ Supports SSH exec commands:

```
[10008 root@ba-mb2 /] ssh 10.21.42.166 'ls -l /root/release.sh'
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 18 May 10 07:50 /root/release.sh
[10009 root@ba-mb2 /] ssh 10.21.42.166 'chmod 744 /root/release.sh'
[10010 root@ba-mb2 /] ssh 10.21.42.166 '/root/release.sh'
Linux
[10011 root@ba-mb2 /] █
```

- ▶ Forward SMTP connections to SMTP 'Spam Trap' (e.g. [mailoney](#))
- ▶ JSON logging for easy processing in log management solutions

Honeypot -> Pineapple

- ▶ Malicious agents use honeypots too
- ▶ Create a 'wi-fi pineapple': fake wi-fi network to mimic a real one
 - ▶ Easily monitor / log traffic and user data
 - ▶ Ethical questionability (I'd use it on my kids)
 - ▶ Good for penetration testing (identify vulnerabilities in a network)

Issues

- ▶ Unable to enable log sorting and display
- ▶ Contact ISP due to conflicting terms of use
- ▶ Difficulties transferring to Raspberry Pi
- ▶ Enabling SSH hardening / SSH key setup

Conclusion

- ▶ Honeypots are a great way to monitor malicious activity
- ▶ Cost-effective, real data collection with few false positives
- ▶ Capture malicious activity, even if an attacker is using encryption
- ▶ Does not replace a standard IDS
- ▶ Zero attempts to access the honeypot means no data to analyze
- ▶ Can be resource extensive to setup properly