

TRUST ME

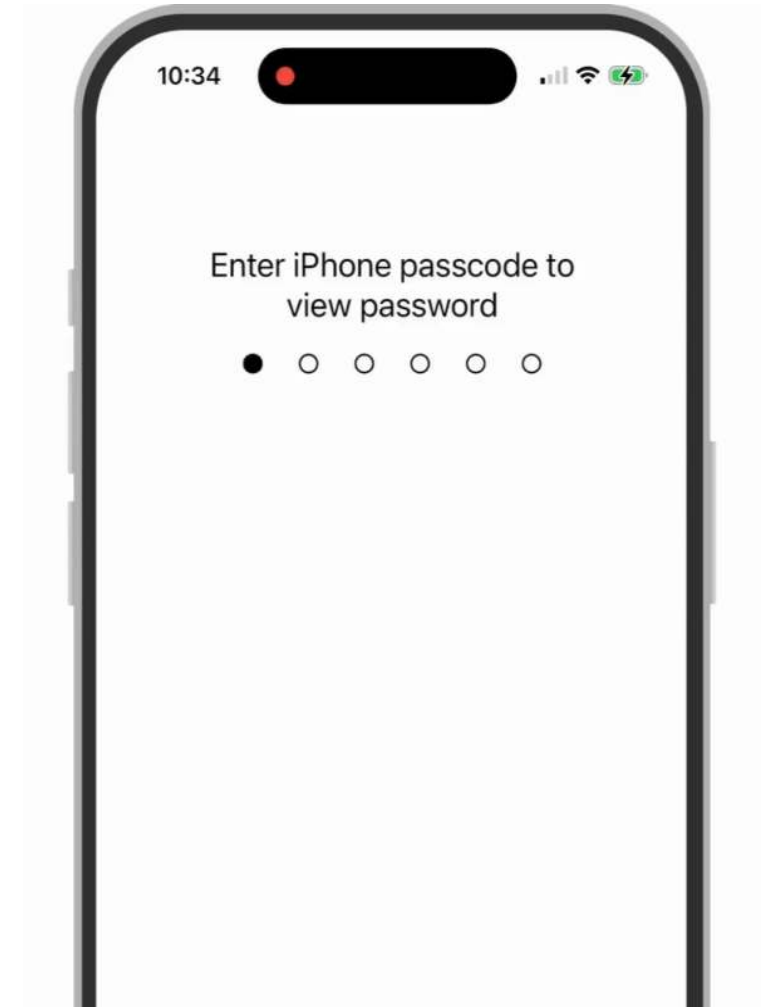
**I'M AN
APPLE WATCH**



A person with dark curly hair is holding a blue iPhone 11 Pro. The phone is held vertically, showing its back with the triple-camera system and the Apple logo. The background is blurred, showing a person in a blue shirt and a bright light source. The text "Privacy. That's iPhone." is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Privacy. That's iPhone.

STRONG AUTH

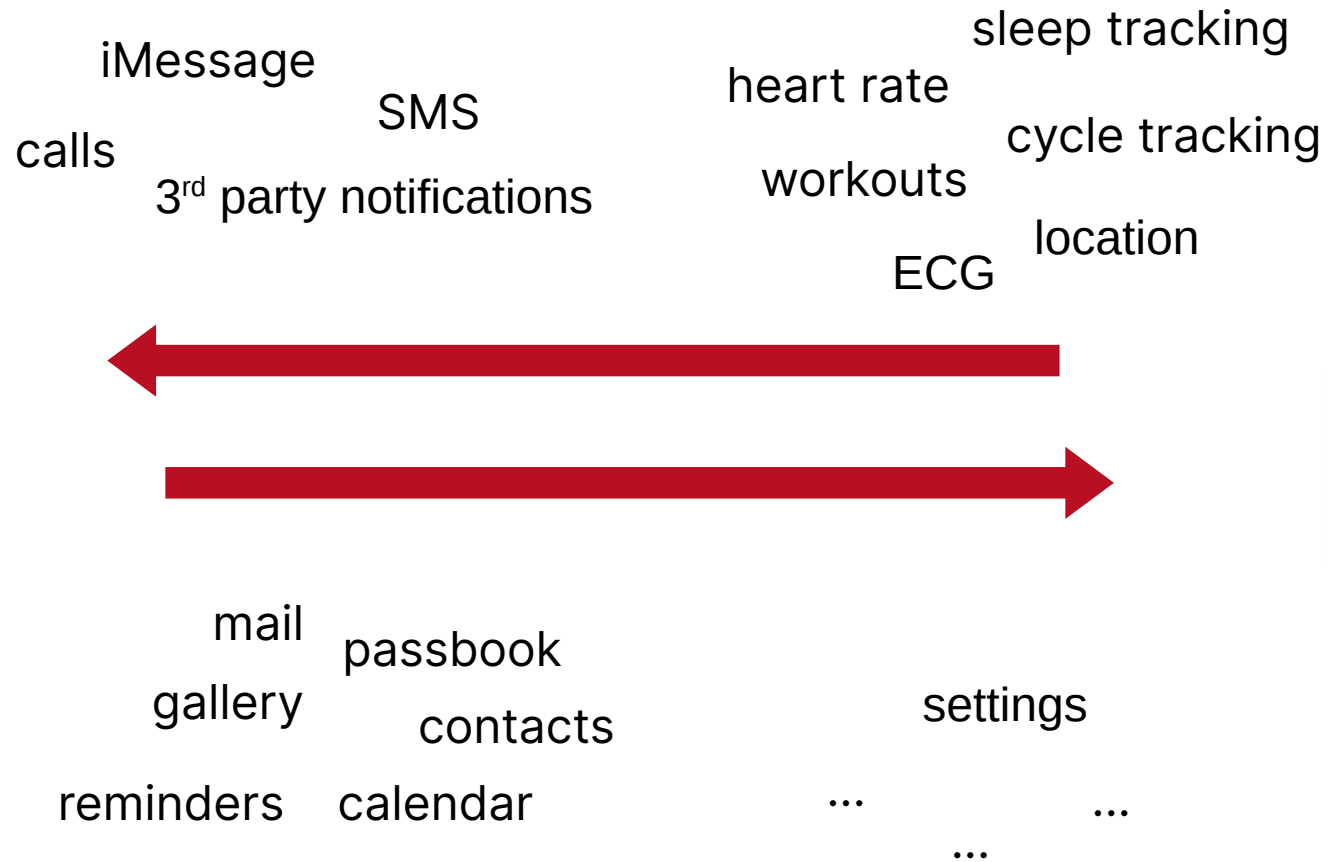


ANOTHER WAY IN



EVERY WHERE YOU GO





TRUST ME

**I'M AN
APPLE WATCH**



insidegui / VisualPairingHack

Q

Type to search

VisualPairingHack

Public

Watch

7

Fork

11

Starred

145

README

BSD-2-Clause license

VisualPairingHack

An experiment with the private VisualPairing framework used for automatic iOS and watchOS device pairing.

About

An experiment with the private VisualPairing framework used for automatic iOS and watchOS device pairing

- Readme
- BSD-2-Clause license
- Activity
- 145 stars
- 7 watching
- 11 forks

Report repository

Releases

No releases published

Packages

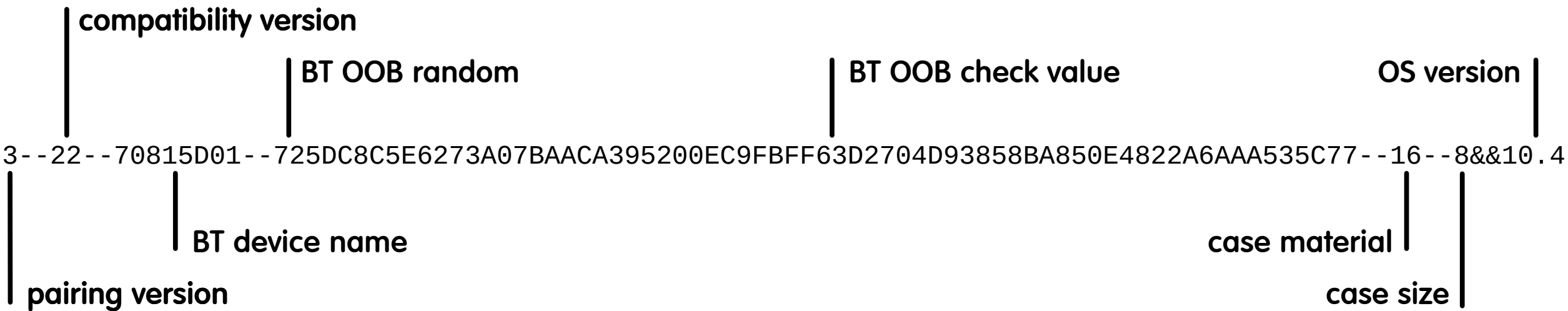
No packages published

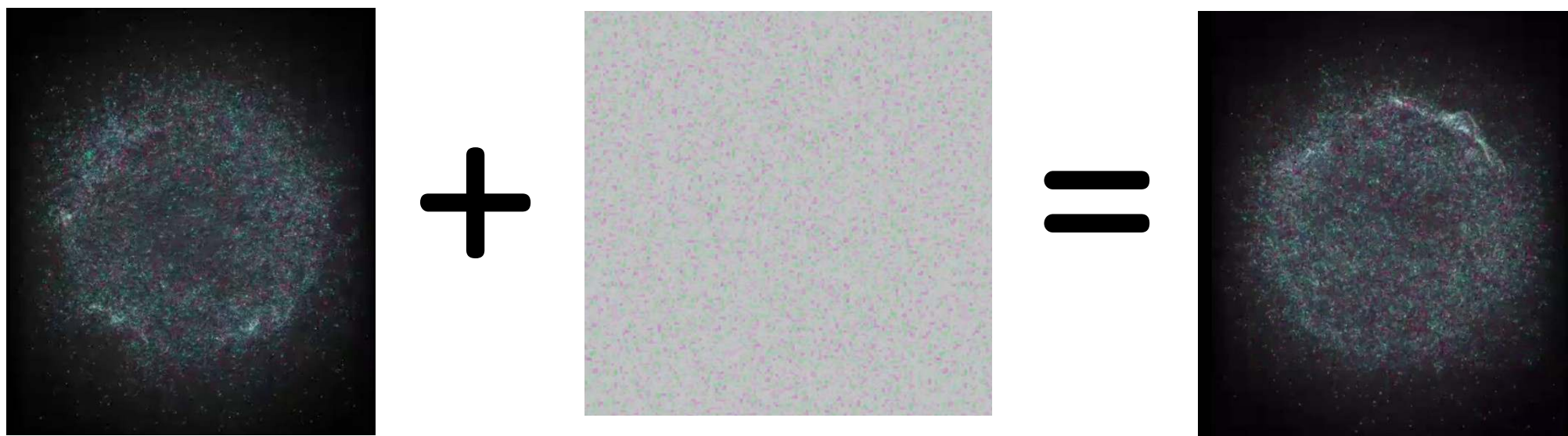
Languages

- Objective-C 100.0%

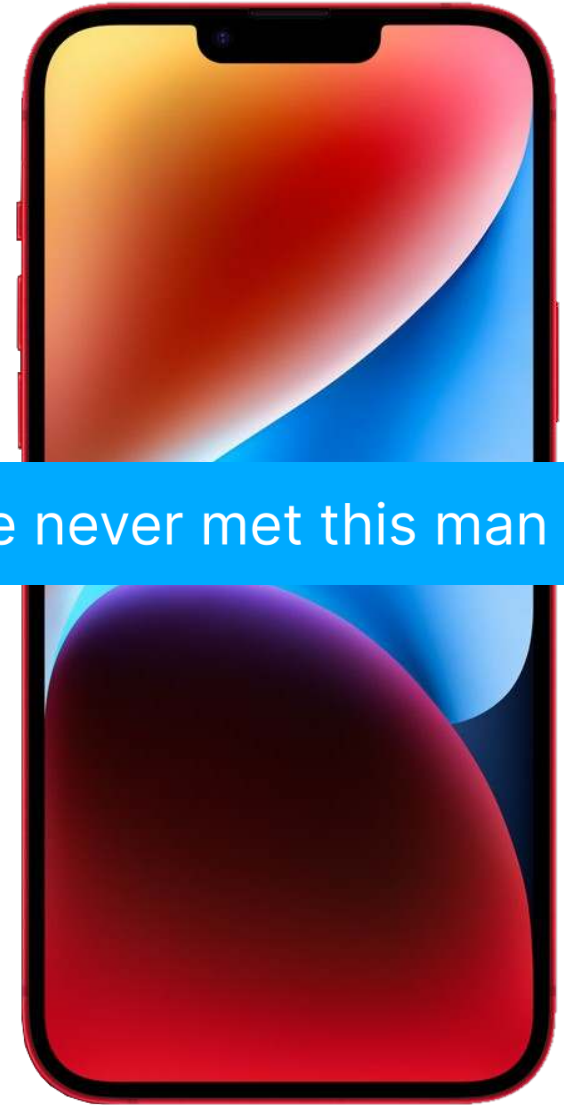
github.com/insidegui/VisualPairingHack

github.com/rec0de/VisualPairingHack



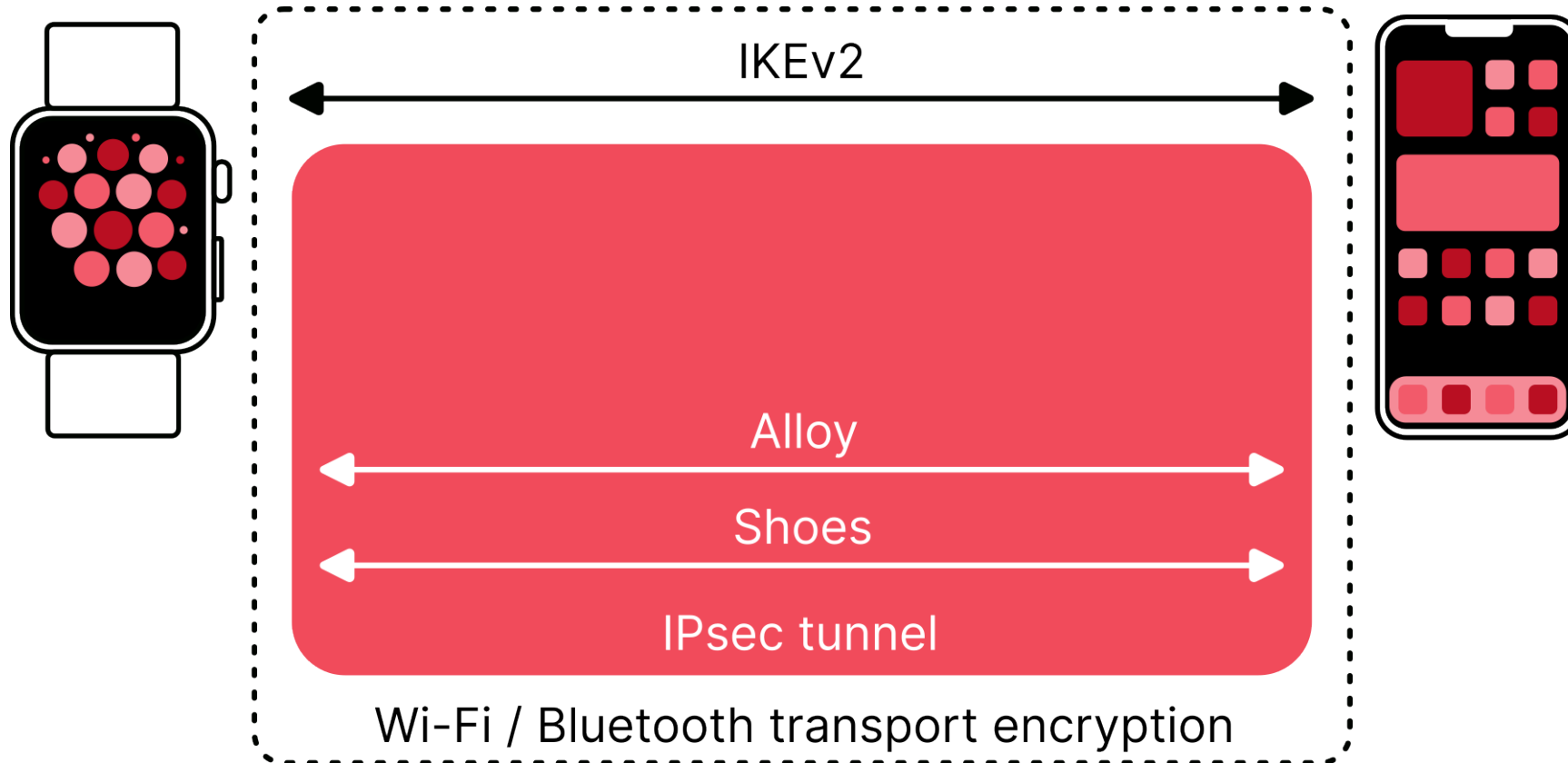


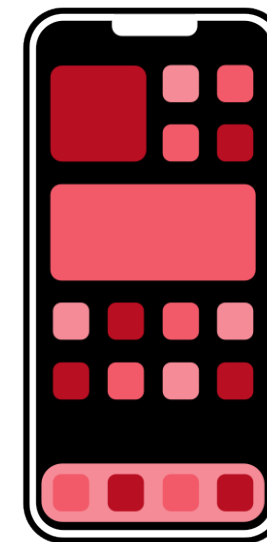
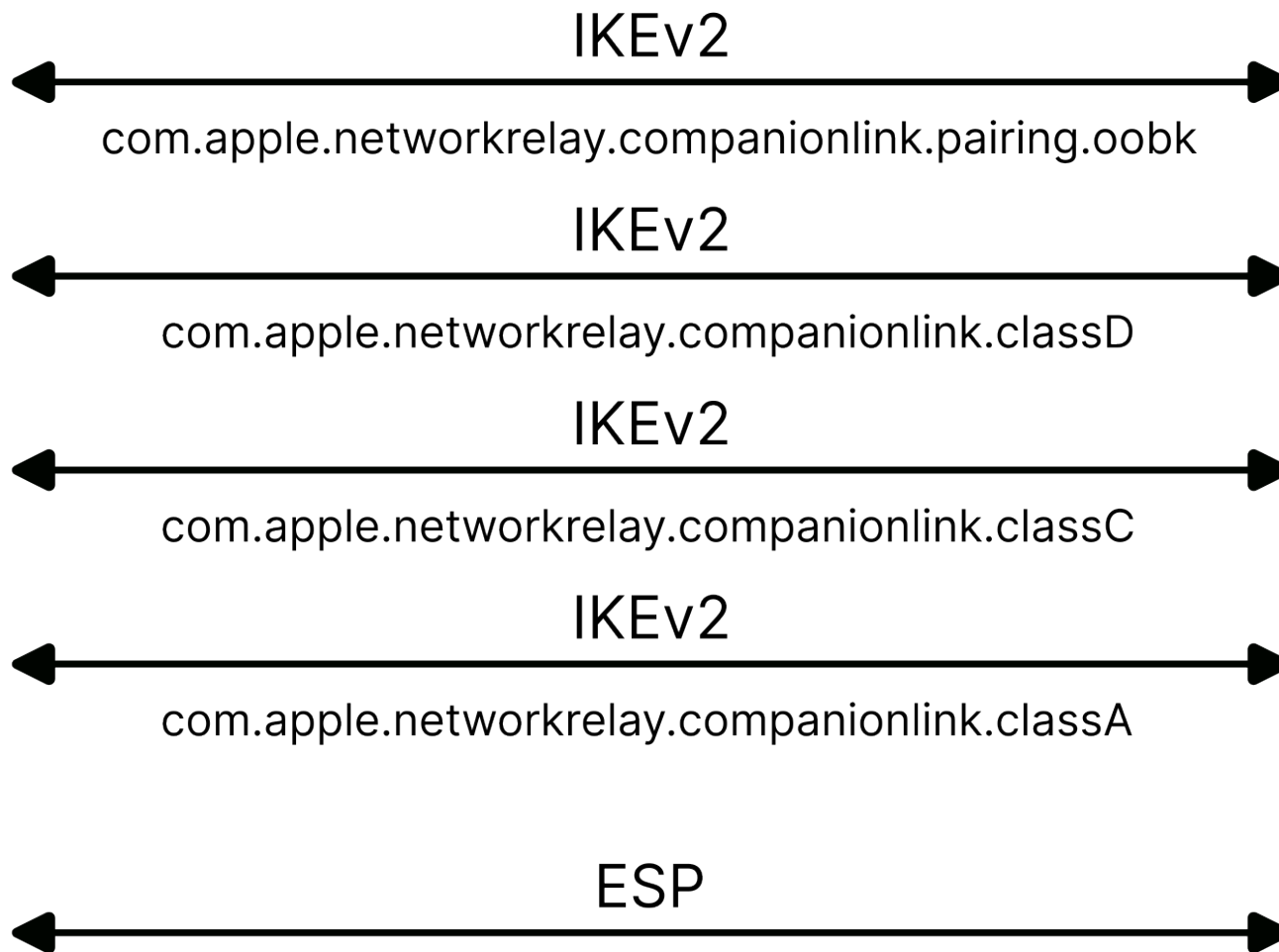
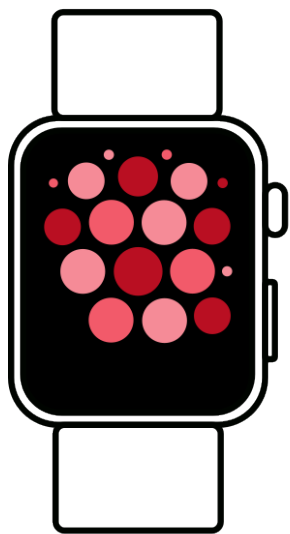
TRUST ME?

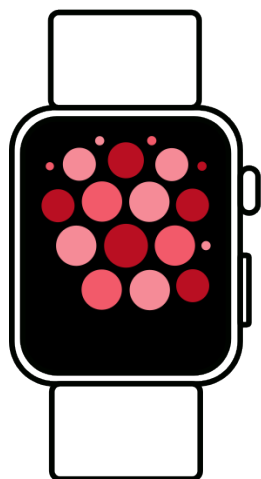


i have never met this man in my life

Tunnels







IKEv2

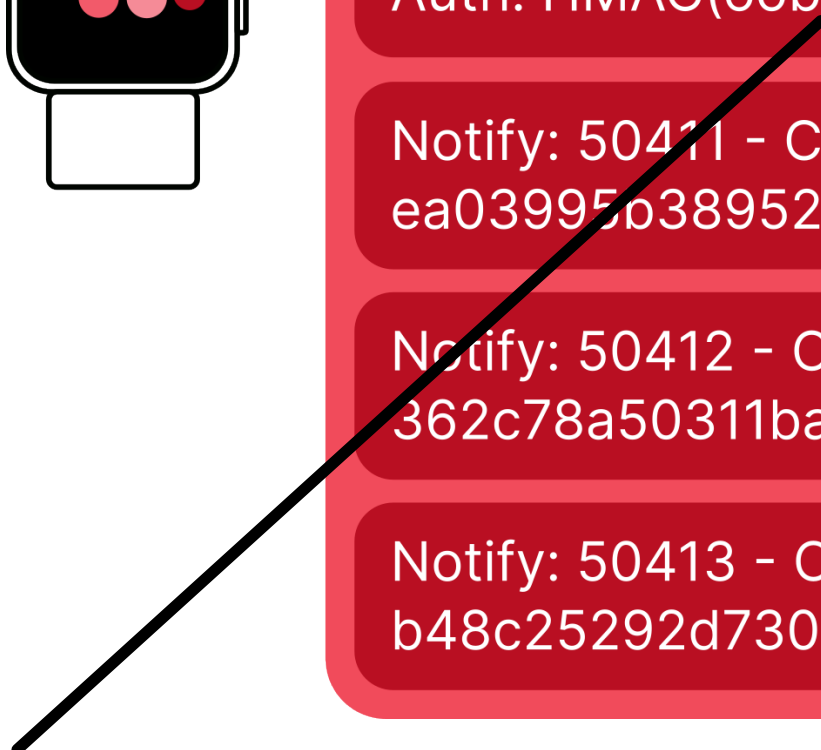
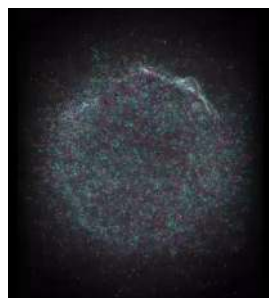
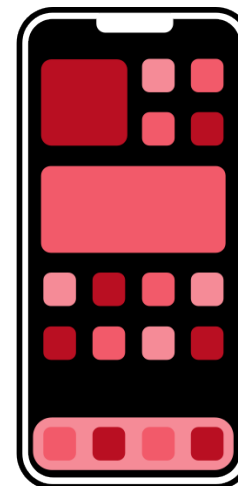
com.apple.networkrelay.companionlink.pairing.oobk

Auth: HMAC(oobkey, ...)

Notify: 50411 - Class D Pubkey
ea03995b38952131959bbc5238aed9...

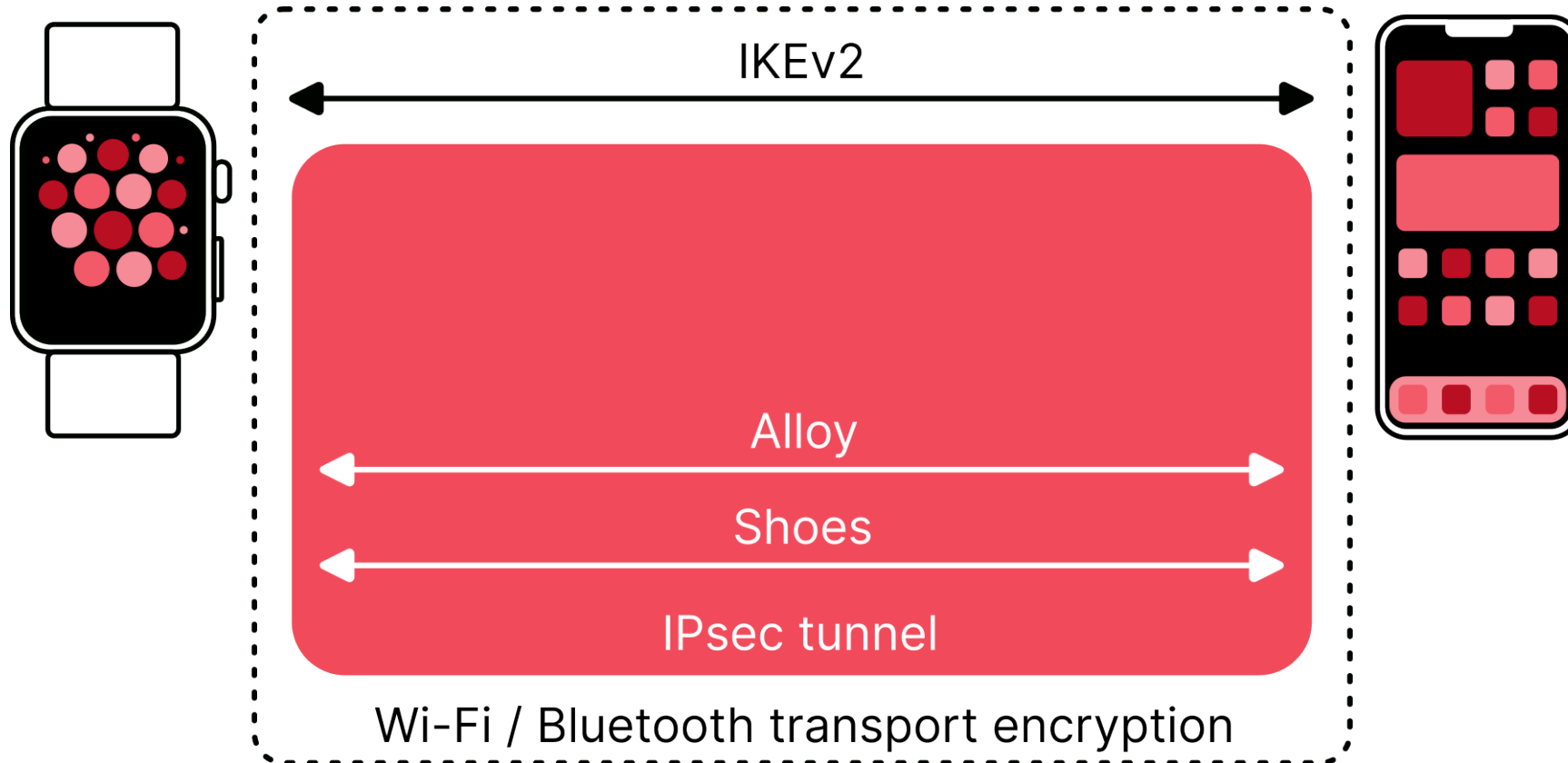
Notify: 50412 - Class C Pubkey
362c78a50311ba3cee7be696b49b03...

Notify: 50413 - Class A Pubkey
b48c25292d730308a058787690dab5...

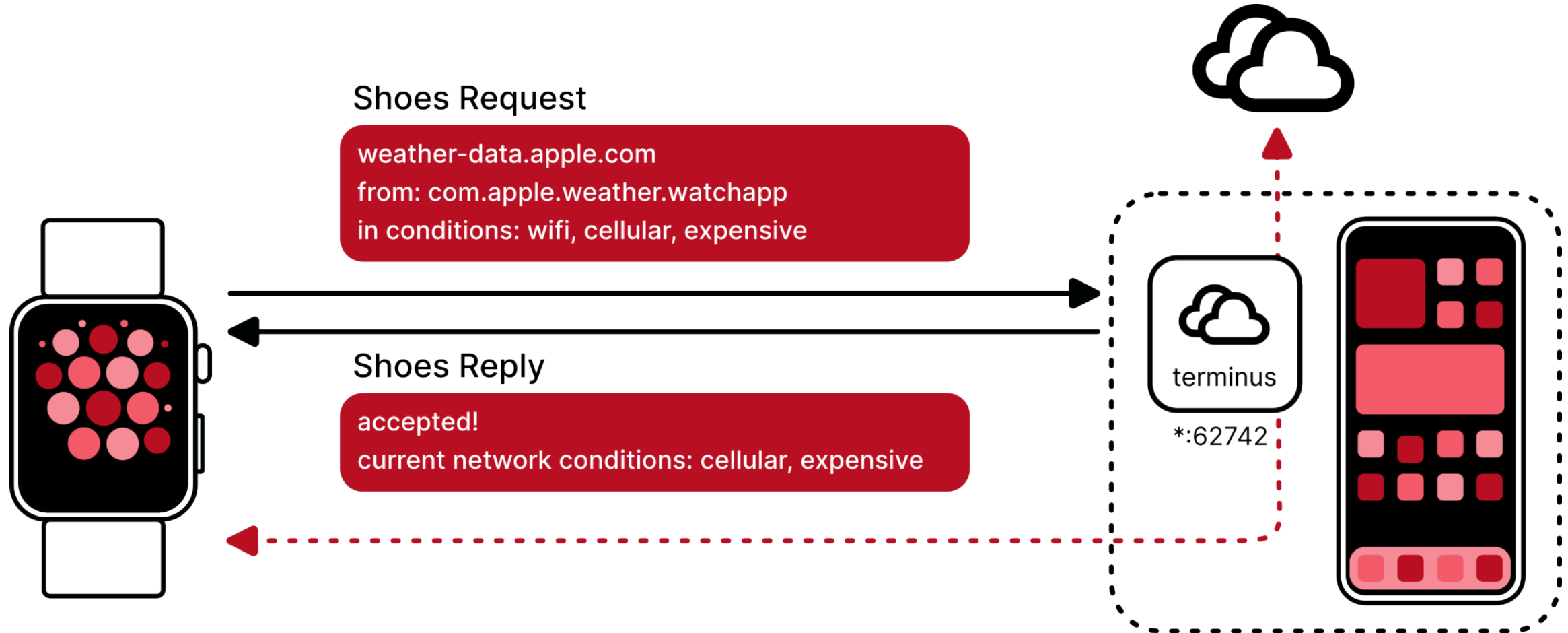


725DC8C5E6273A07BAACA395200EC9FBFF63D2704D93858BA850E4822A6AAA535C77

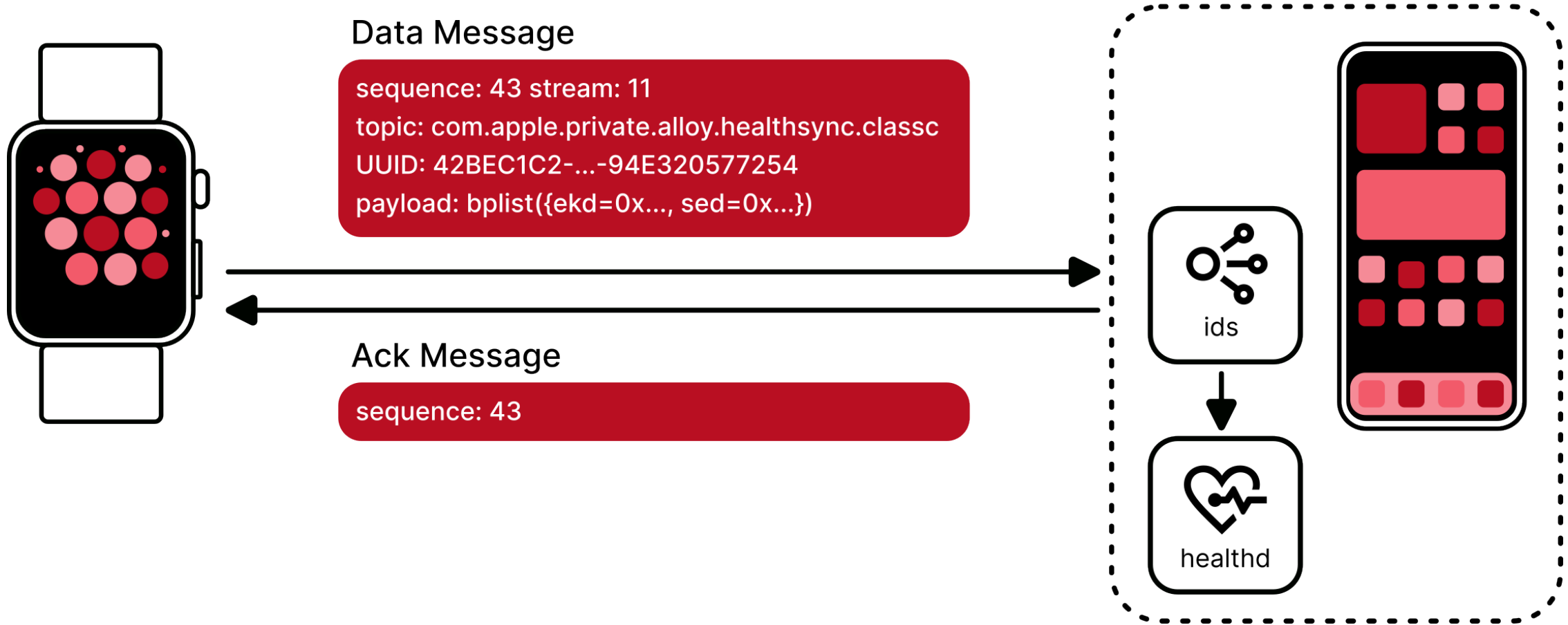
Tunnels



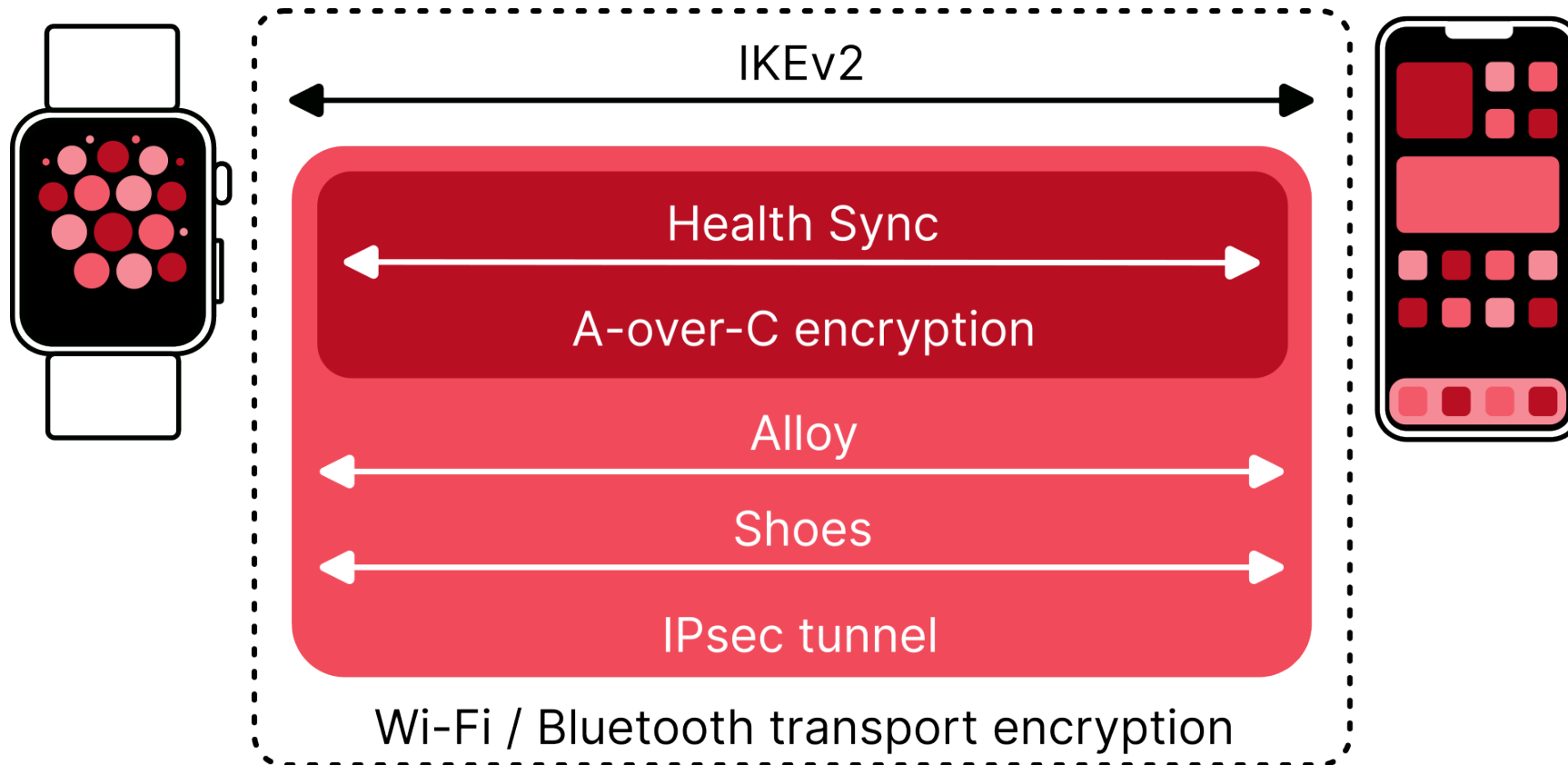
Shoes

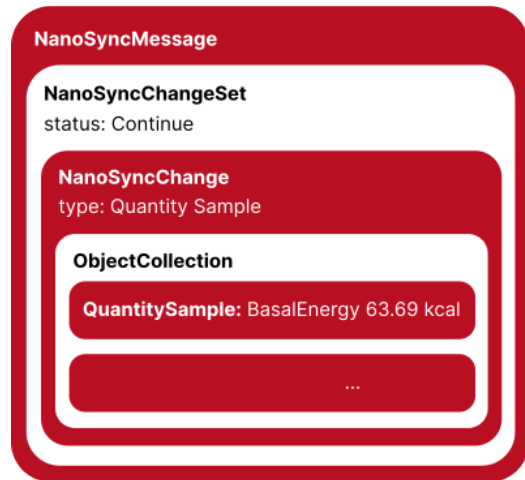


Alloy



Tunnels





A-over-C

ekd:
0xac0754acd24ef3556f2e55...
sed:
0xec2238452af1f02ac7a26df9b
31d8f1a0ff7b1516372eadedd37
c81c5478da1dbee8bddefcedc39
c33e4ab223145dc910e265fafb4
62958d2b00cb10ad35e5bb2...



Data Message

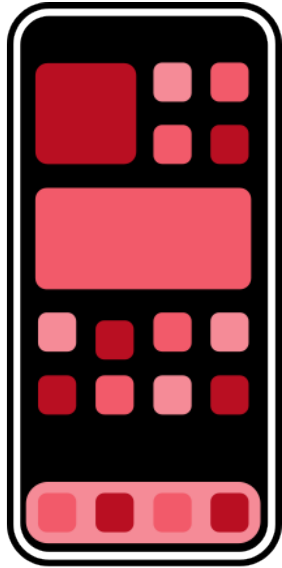
sequence: 43 stream: 11
com.apple.private.alloy.healthsync.classc
UUID: 42BEC1C2-...-94E320577254
payload: bplist({ekd=0x..., sed=0x...})



ESP



NRLP



LET'S RE BUILD



AARS

```
service_aars = Service(  
    '9aa4730f-b25c-4cc3-b821-c931559fc196',  
    [  
        # AARS Device Name  
        Characteristic(  
            'e168d473-8efd-4485-a1fd-b25edad4dce2',  
            # Watch5,1 + version info protobuf  
            '0a085761746368352c31108680021801200f28013000',  
        ),  
        # AARS Push  
        Characteristic(  
            '1f9636e6-ca97-4c30-bc5f-c477d6a6cf32',  
        ),  
        # AARS Nano  
        Characteristic(  
            '5f6c6a23-8ac8-400e-810b-017134943460',  
        ),  
    ]  
)
```



AARS
GATT
L2CAP

MAGNET

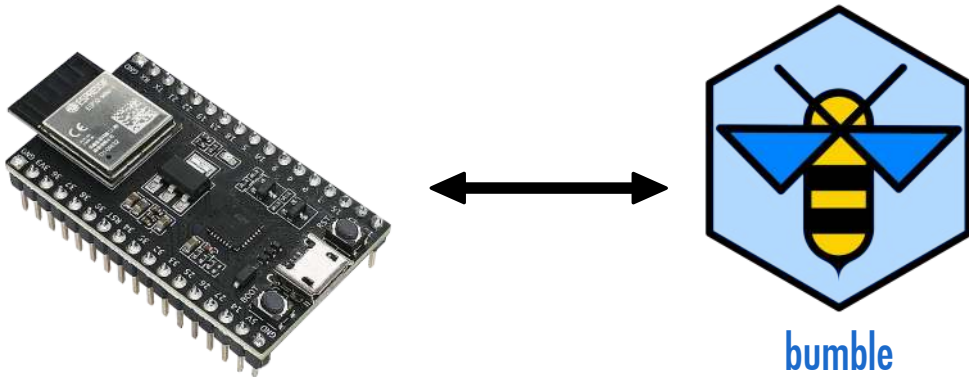
No.	Protocol	Info
1039	MAGNET	Version Info
1043	MAGNET	Version Info
1044	MAGNET	Advertise Remote Services
1055	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1056	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1076	MAGNET	Service Channel Accepted
1278	MAGNET	Service Added
1279	MAGNET	Service Added
1280	MAGNET	Service Added
1281	MAGNET	Service Added
1282	MAGNET	Service Added
1283	MAGNET	Service Added
1284	MAGNET	Service Added
1286	MAGNET	Service Added
1287	MAGNET	DID info
1303	MAGNET	DID info
1305	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1306	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1308	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1310	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1311	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1312	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1314	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1315	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1317	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1318	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1323	MAGNET	Response Remote Services
1325	MAGNET	Service Channel Created
1332	MAGNET	Service Channel Accepted

- Bluetooth L2CAP Protocol
 - Length: 31
 - CID: Reserved (0x003a)
- Apple MAGNET
 - Magnet Opcode: Service Added (0x05)
 - MagnetL Data Length: 28
 - Service ID: 7
 - Unknown Data: 01
 - Service Name: com.apple.terminusLink
 - Service Option: 0x01

[github: watchwitch-wireshark](#)

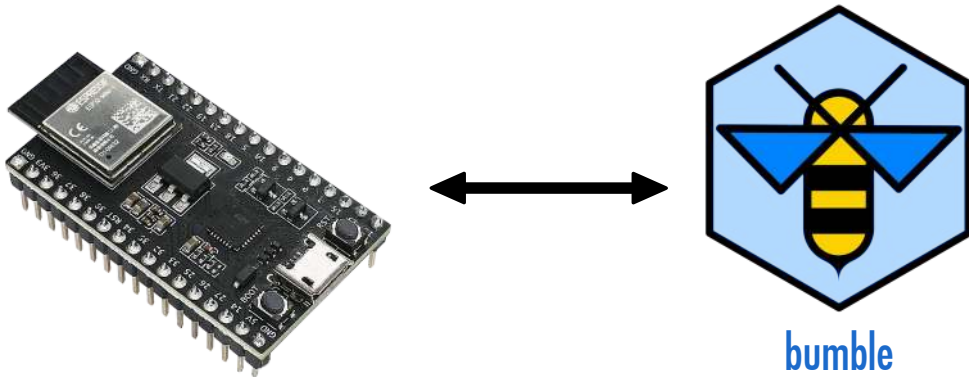


MAGNET

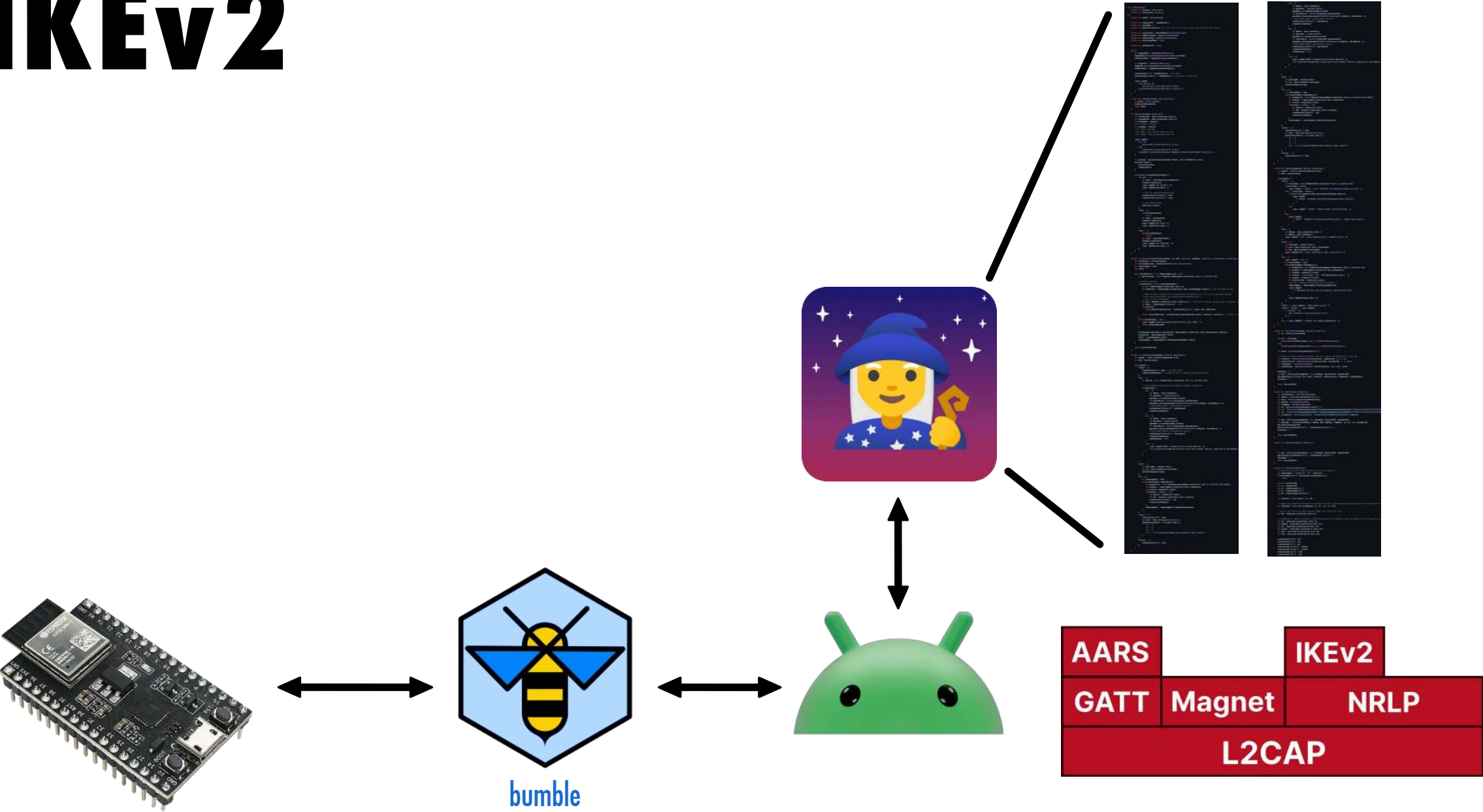


MAGNET

```
connection.send_l2cap_pdu(0x3a, bytearray.fromhex('09050ab3080000')) # version info  
device.l2cap_channel_manager.register_fixed_channel(0x3a, magnet)
```



IKEv2



ESP

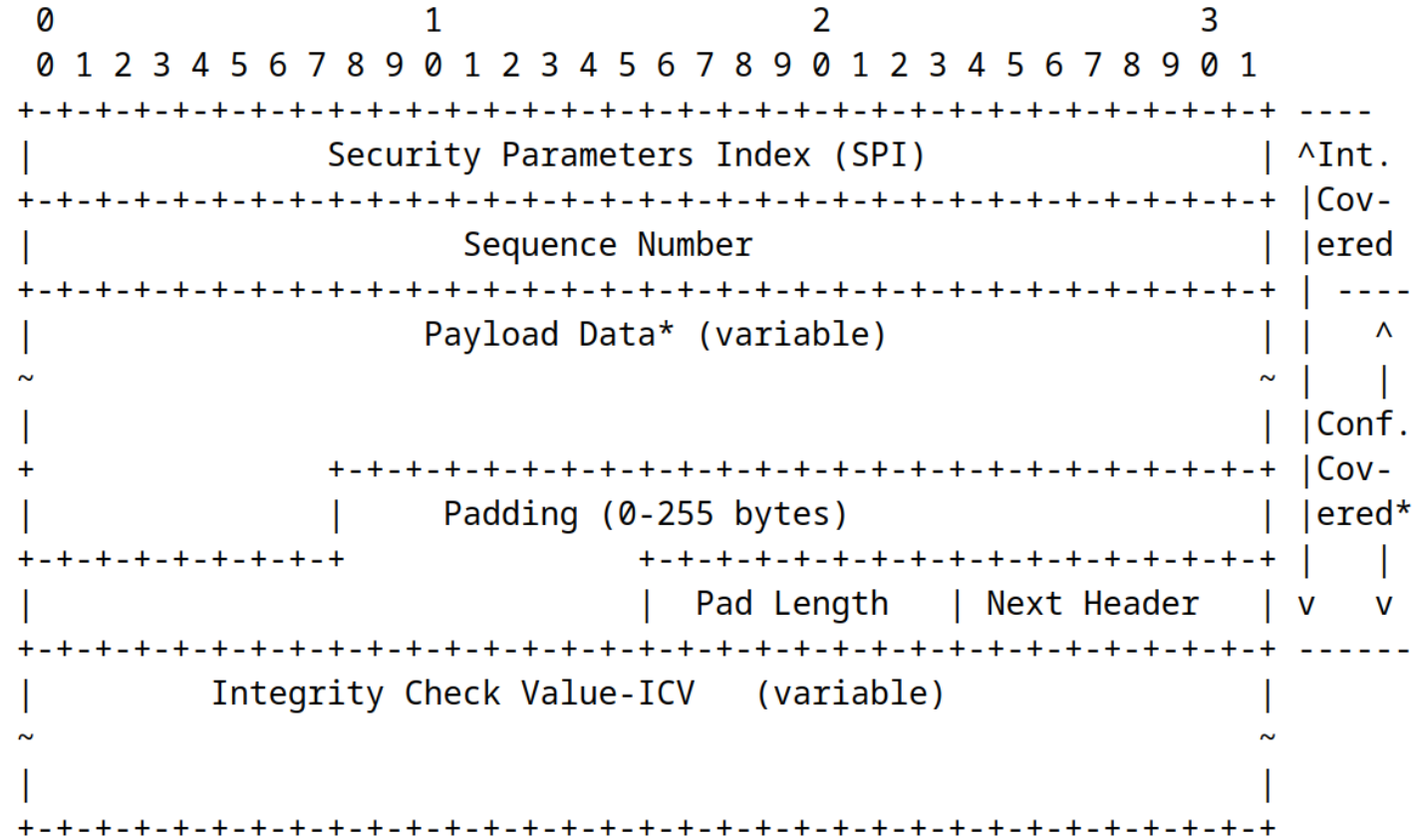


Figure 1. Top-Level Format of an ESP Packet



ESP

```
ip xfrm state add src $localV4 dst $remoteV4 proto esp spi 0xa... mode tunnel aead 'rfc4106(gcm(aes))' 0x1... 128 sel src "::0/0" dst "::0/0"  
ip xfrm state add src $remoteV4 dst $localV4 proto esp spi 0xb... mode tunnel aead 'rfc4106(gcm(aes))' 0x2... 128 sel src "::0/0" dst "::0/0"  
ip -6 xfrm policy add src $localV6/112 dst $remoteV6/112 dir out tmpl src $localV4 dst $remoteV4 proto esp reqid 0xa... mode tunnel  
ip -6 xfrm policy add src $remoteV6/112 dst $localV6/112 dir in tmpl src $remoteV4 dst $localV4 proto esp reqid 0xb... mode tunnel
```

easy!



ESP

Status: Proposed Standard
More info: [Datatracker](#) | [IPR](#) | [Info page](#)

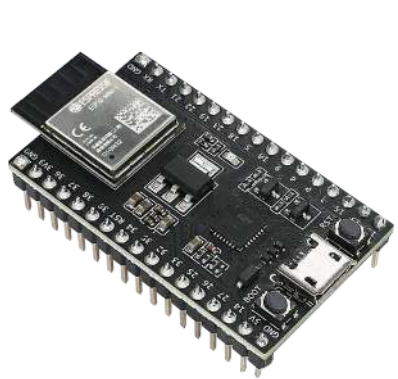
Stream: Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)
RFC: [8750](#)
Category: Standards Track
Published: March 2020
ISSN: 2070-1721
Authors: D. Migault T. Guggemos Y. Nir
Ericsson LMU Munich Dell Technologies

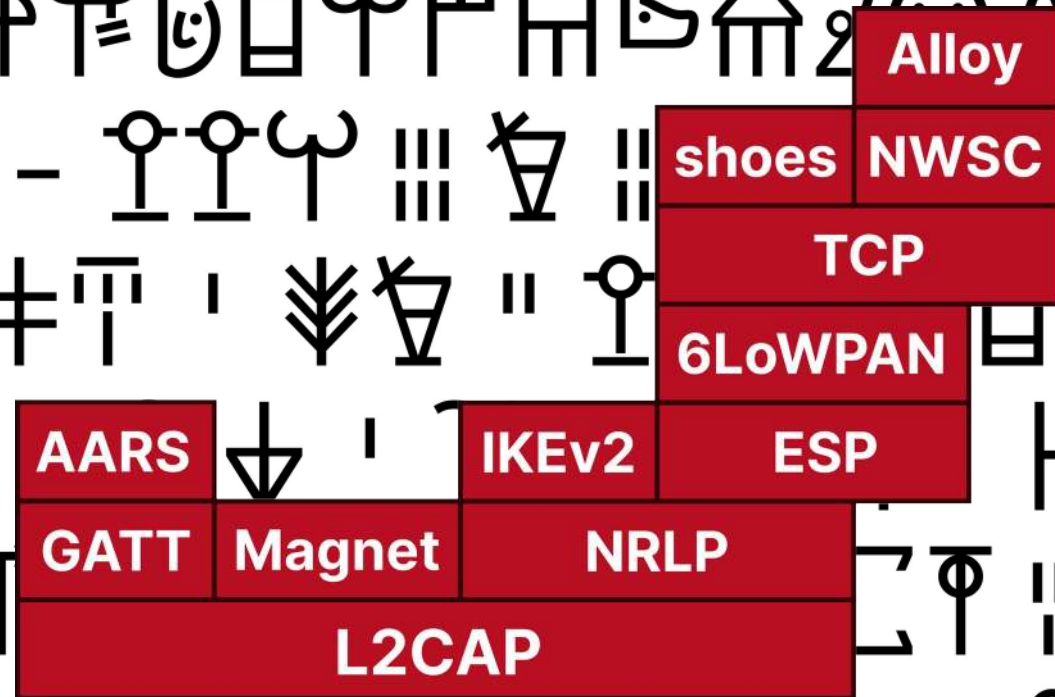
RFC 8750

Implicit Initialization Vector (IV) for Counter-Based Ciphers in Encapsulating Security Payload (ESP)



ESP

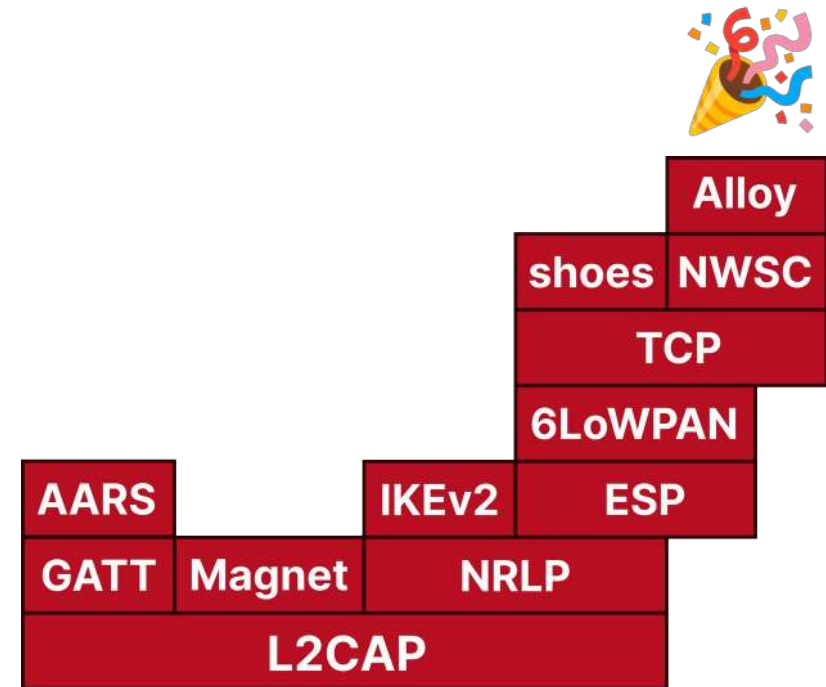


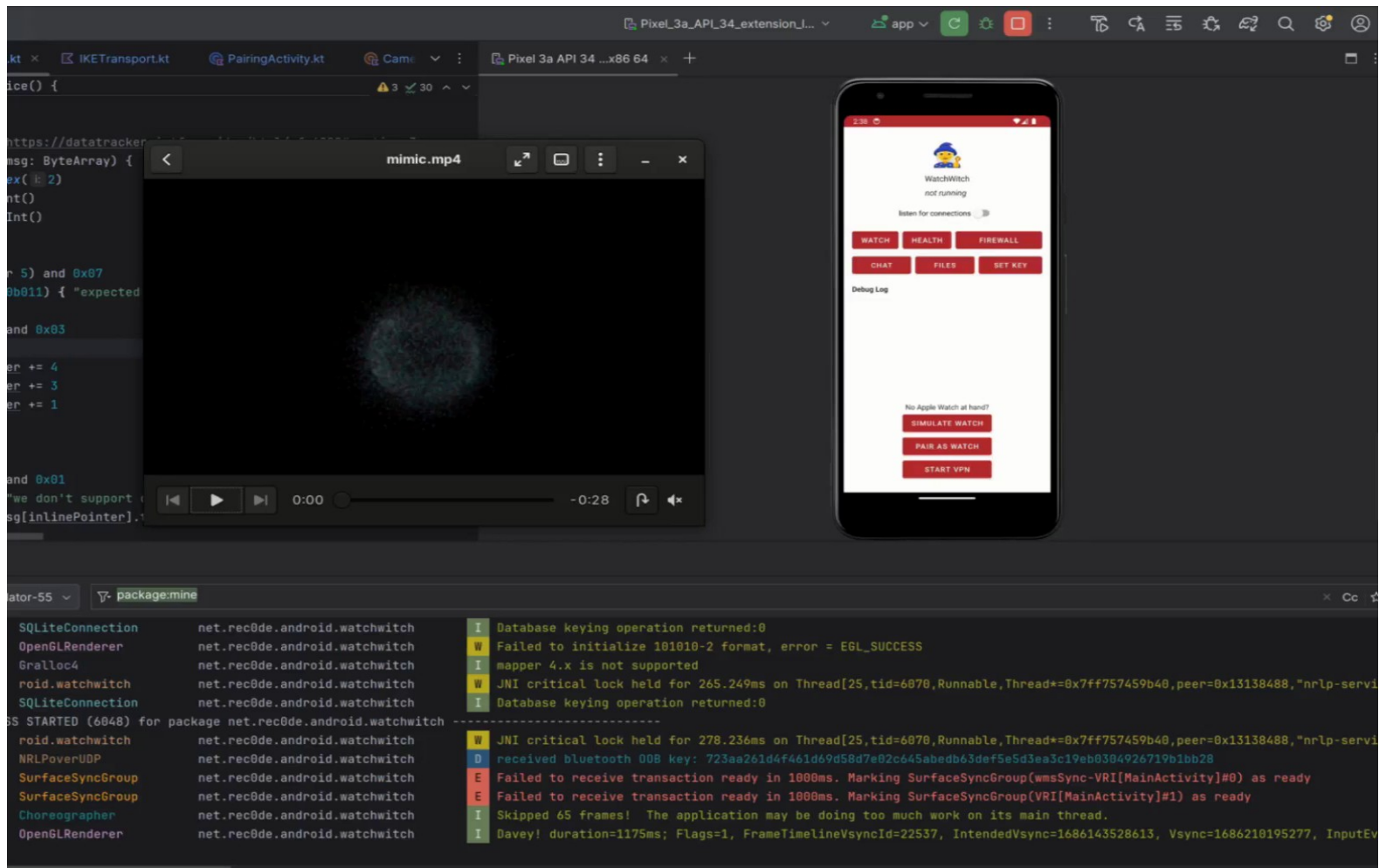


ALLOY

play along for ~350 messages or 250kB and...

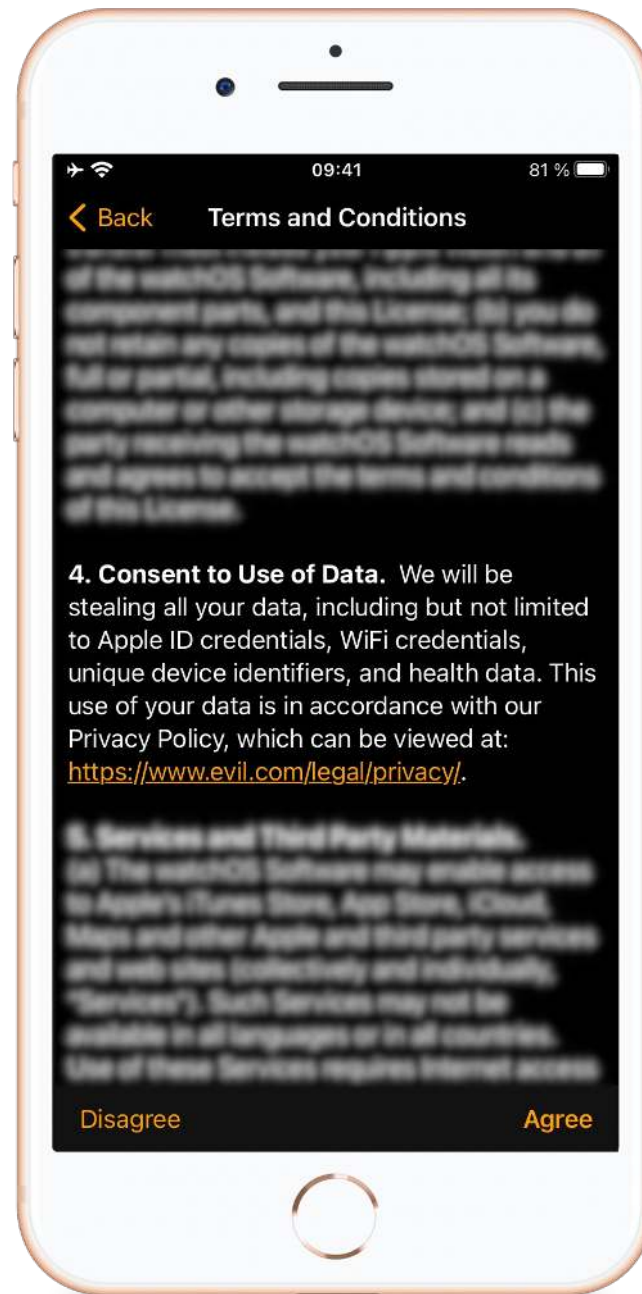
your wifi password →

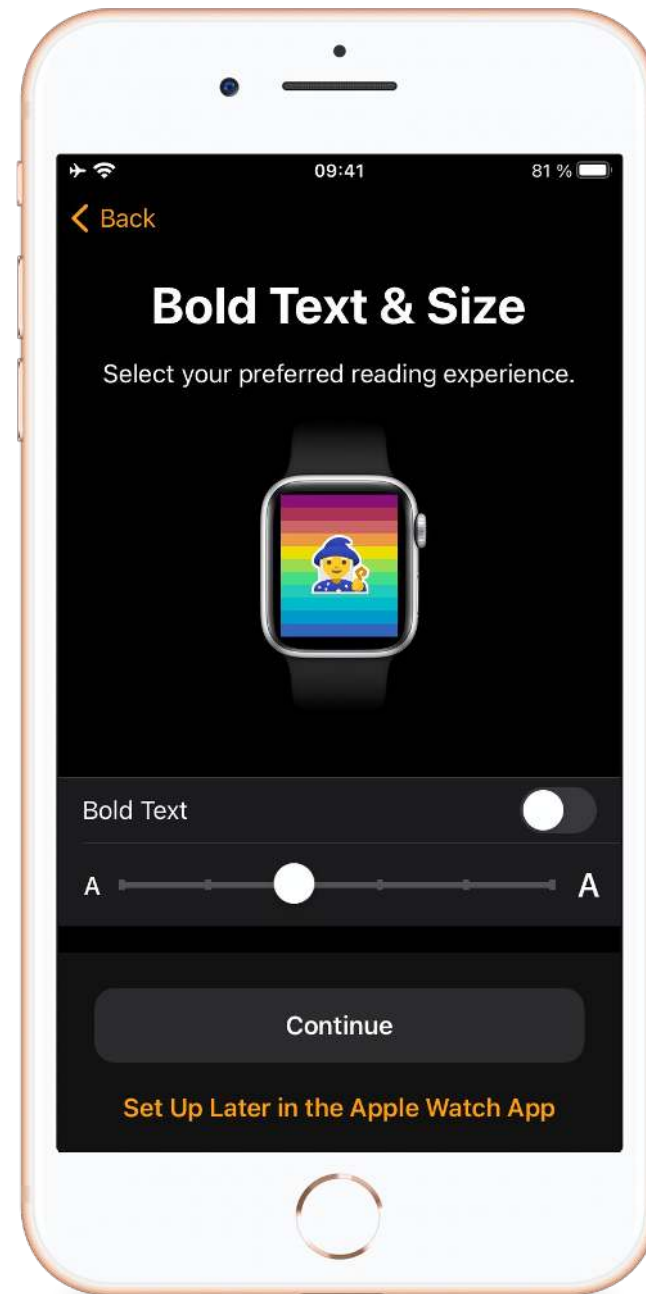
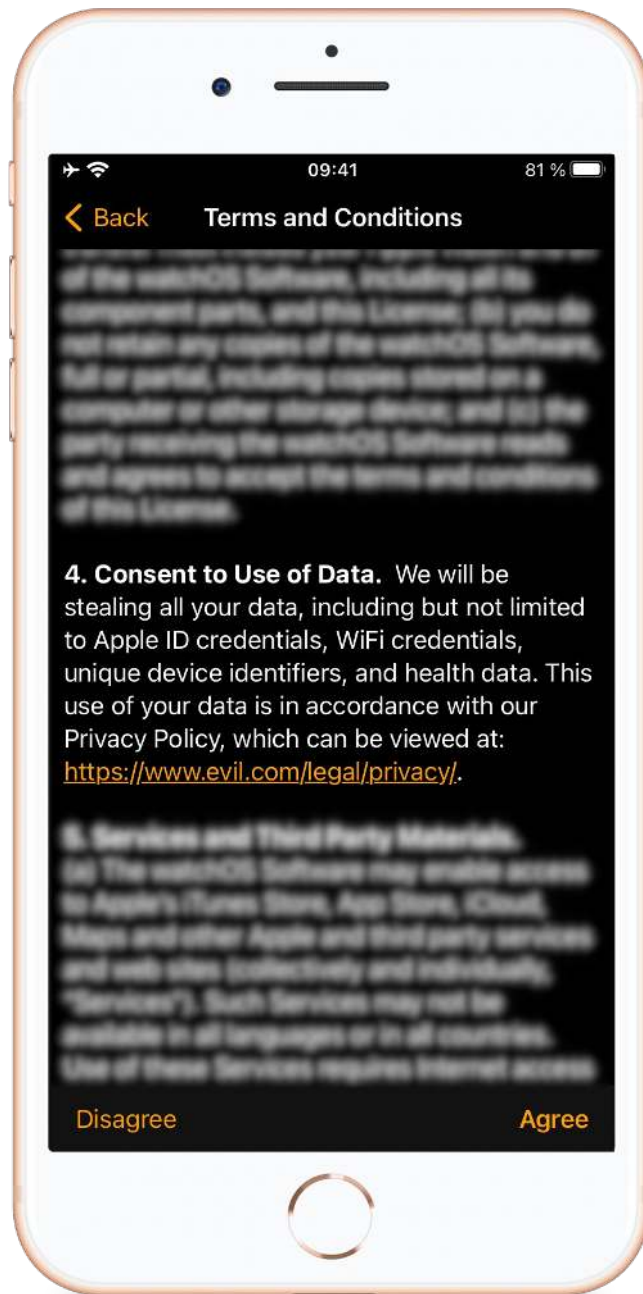


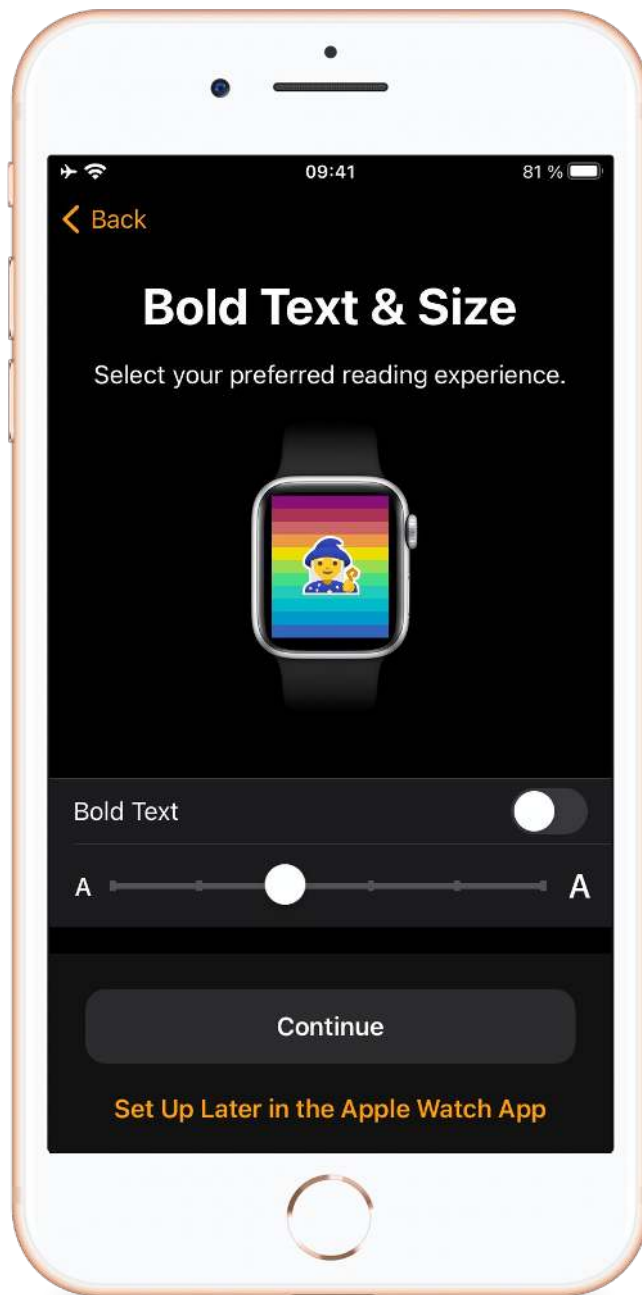
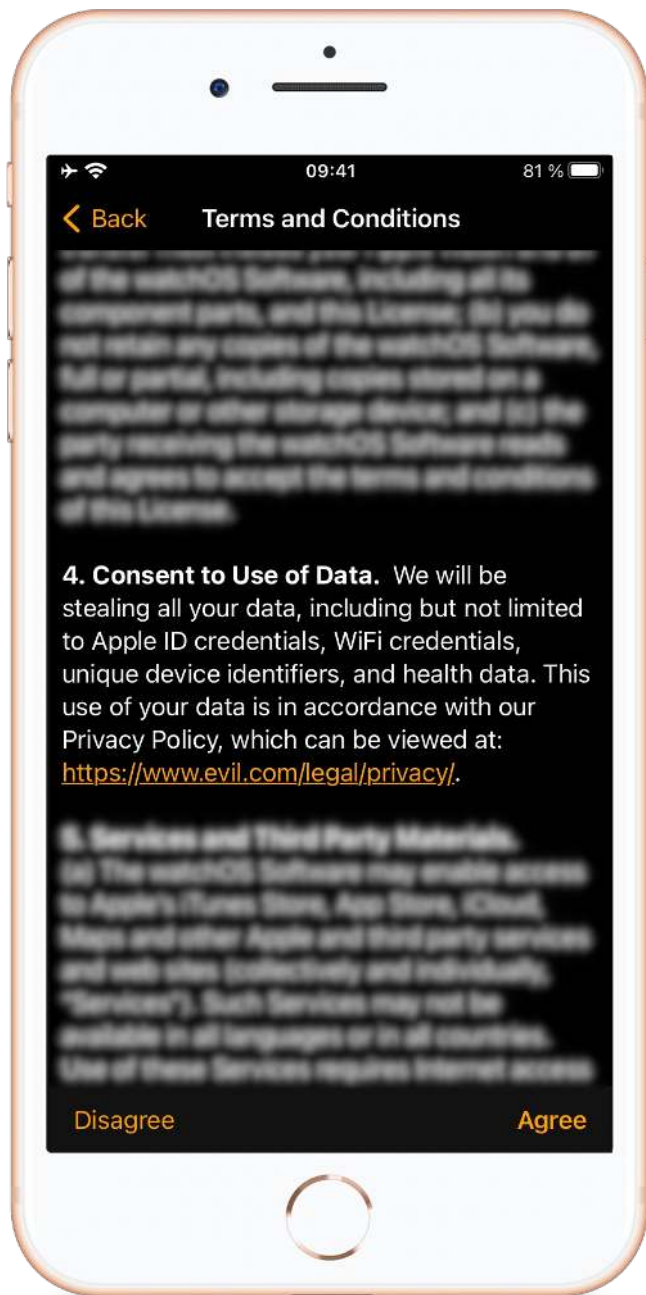


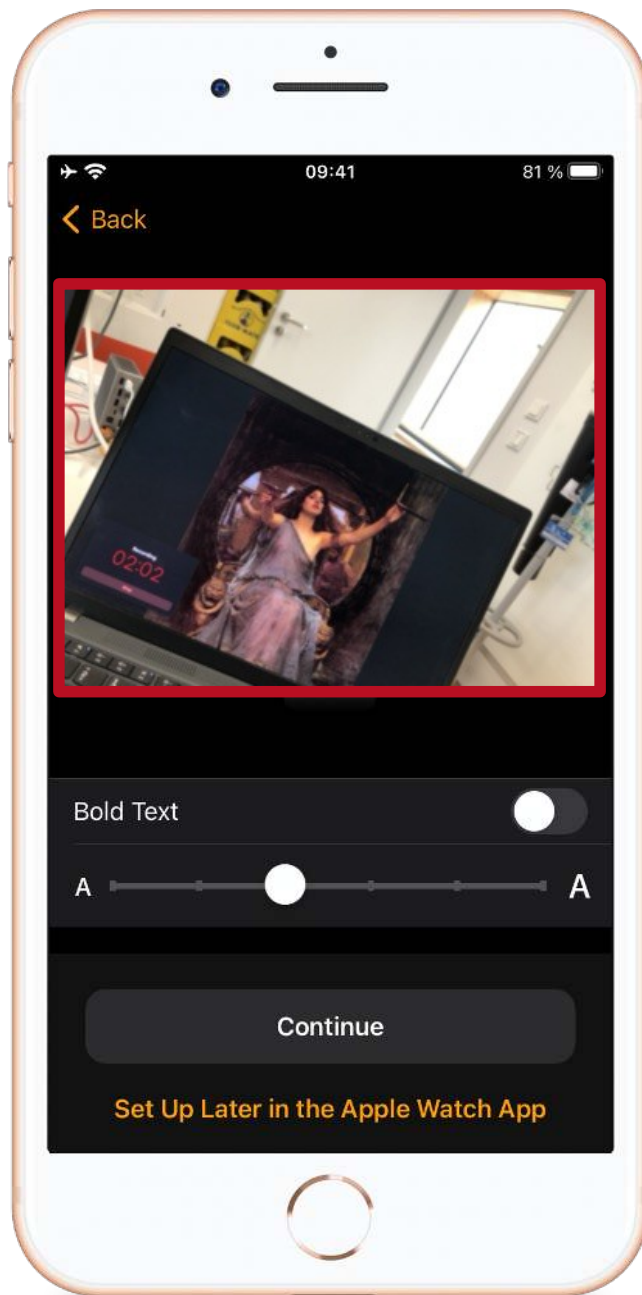
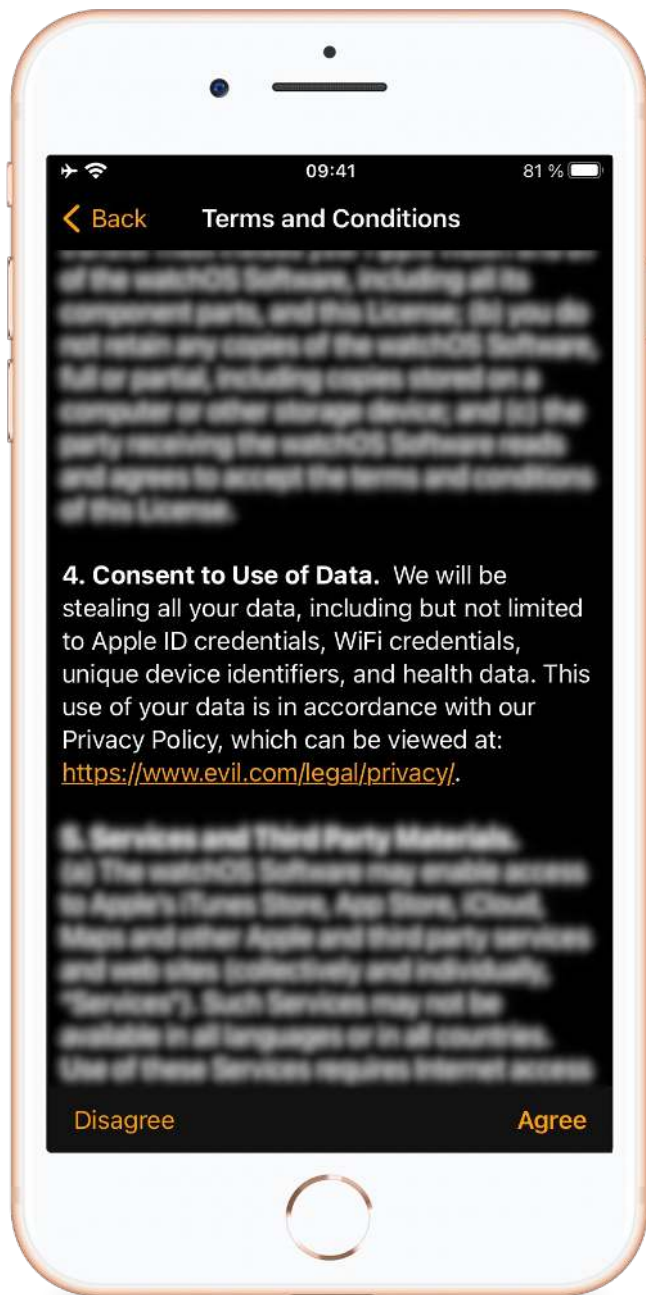
WELL, SHIT.











BREAK ME APART

6.3 Forging Health Values



IKEv2 Handling

3.10. Notify Payload

The Notify payload, denoted N in this document, is used to transmit informational data, such as error conditions and state transitions, to an IKE peer. A Notify payload may appear in a response message (usually specifying why a request was rejected), in an INFORMATIONAL exchange (to report an error not in an IKE request), or in any other message to indicate sender capabilities or to modify the meaning of the request.

— [RFC 7296](#)

IKEv2 Handling

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— RFC 7296

48603	Device name	e.g. "iPhone", "Apple Watch"
48604	Build version	e.g. "18H17", "18S830"
50701	ProxyNotify	IPv6 address and port of SHOES server on the phone
50702	LinkDirectorMessage	used for link state signaling and WiFi discovery

Apple-defined private notify types

Type	Name	Comment
1	Hello	no payload, signals restart
2	UpdateWiFiAddressIPv6	2 byte port followed by 16 byte IP
3	UpdateWiFiAddressIPv4	2 byte port followed by 4 byte IP
4	UpdateWiFiSignature	variable length, unused?
5	PreferWiFi	no payload
6	DeviceLinkState	1 byte preferred link, 1: Bluetooth, 2: WiFi

IKEv2 Handling

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IKEv2 Handling

3.10. Notify Payload

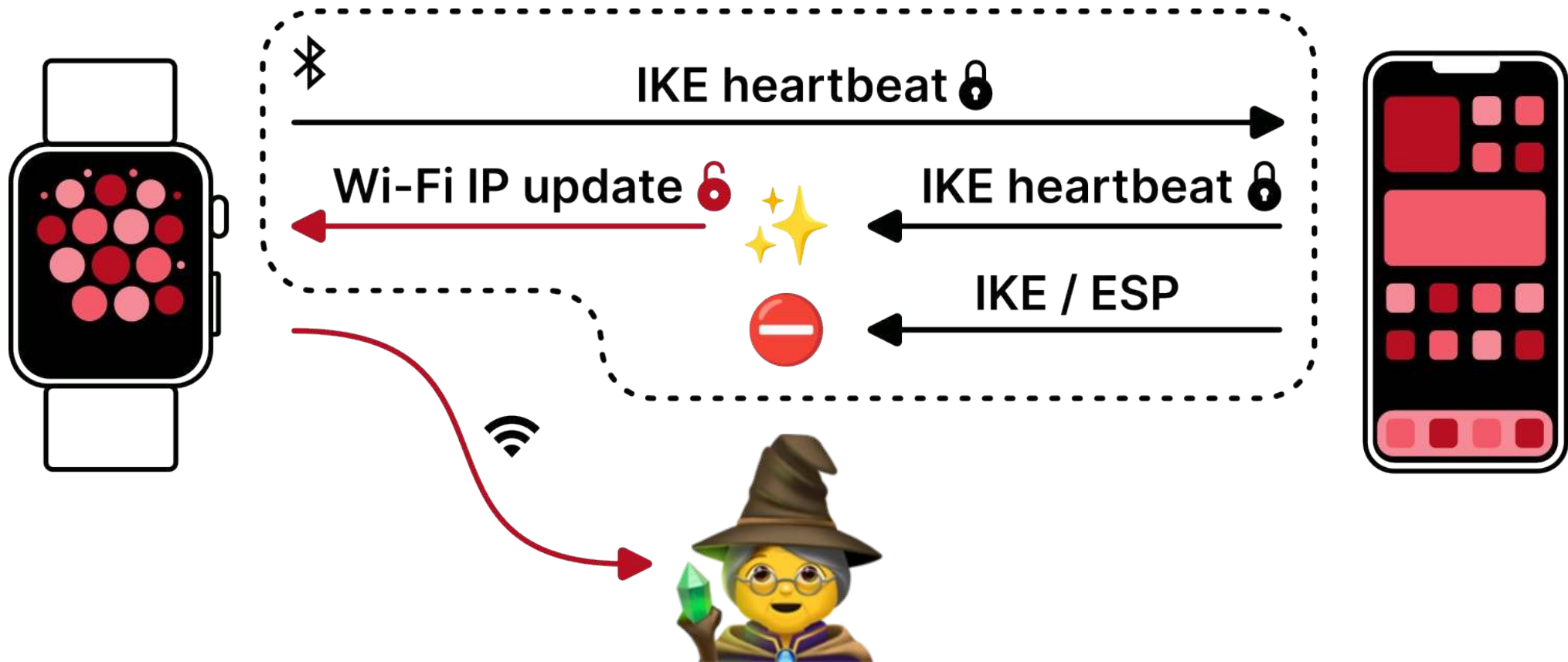
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injection of a forged Wi-Fi IP address update

DISCLOSURE

Apple Security Research

New Report

Search



Open

Closed

Drafts

[Redacted] >

[Redacted]

Thank you for the update and letting us k

In Beta

OE [Redacted]

Resolved ✓

[Redacted] >

[Redacted]

Thanks for letting us know and congrat...

OE [Redacted]

Reproduced

INTEROPERABILITY



WATCH WITCH





~230 Alloy topics across 151 iOS binaries

INTEROP WIN?



FURTHER

READING

WatchWitch: Interoperability, Privacy, and Autonomy for the Apple Watch

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Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany
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Matthias Hollick
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Jiska Classen
Hasso Plattner Institute
University of Potsdam, Germany
jiska.classen@hpi.de

Abstract

Smartwatches such as the Apple Watch collect vast amounts of intimate health and fitness data as we wear them. Users have little choice regarding how this data is processed: The Apple Watch can only be used with Apple's iPhones, using their software and their cloud services. We are the first to publicly reverse-engineer the watch's wireless protocols, which led to discovering multiple security issues in Apple's proprietary implementation. With WatchWitch, our custom Android reimplementation, we break out of Apple's walled garden—demonstrating practical interoperability with enhanced privacy controls and data autonomy. We thus pave the way for more consumer choice in the smartwatch ecosystem, offering users more control over their devices.

Keywords

Wearables, Apple Watch, Privacy, Reverse Engineering

1 Introduction

Of all our devices, our smartwatches know us best: Always on our wrists, they collect intimate data even as we sleep. As users, however, we have little control over this data. The dominating smartwatch vendors—including Apple [90, p. 39–41], Samsung [66], and Google [23]—all rely on ecosystem lock-in effects: For example, users can only use their Apple Watch with an iPhone, and no third-party smartwatch can offer the same level of integration with an iPhone as Apple's watches. Apple Watch owners are forced to use their watches on Apple's terms—using their devices, their software, and their cloud services. This leaves users of many smartwatches, from Apple or other vendors, with little control over their devices and nebulous promises of privacy.

This vendor lock-in has not gone unnoticed by legislators: An antitrust motion in the US identifies the Apple Watch as part of Apple's alleged smartphone monopoly and demands more interoperability [90]. Similar efforts are being implemented in the EU with the Digital Markets Act [38]. Apple claims to have researched interoperability for three years, concluding that it was infeasible [67].

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1868, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA. Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies 2024(3), 1–38 © 2024 Copyright held by the owner/authors. <https://doi.org/10.56553/pet-2024-0001>

In this context, we introduce WatchWitch: Based on extensive reverse-engineering of the Apple Watch, we create an open-source Android app that allows users to use their Apple Watch on their own terms and with an Android phone. Unlike the closed-source iOS system, Android lets users control much larger parts of the software stack. Our proof-of-concept WatchWitch app shows that interoperability is feasible in practice and demonstrates how all users, iOS and Android, can benefit from using custom software built with their needs in mind—gaining independence from vendors with a history of privacy violations [22, 26, 39, 70].

Beyond reimplementing features provided by Apple, WatchWitch gives users better privacy controls and full autonomy over their data: We allow users to make fine-grained decisions about the watch's network connections through a user-controlled firewall and keep all their health data securely on-device. At the same time, we give them full access to the data their watch collects beyond what is displayed in Apple's standard user interface (UI).

In the process of reverse-engineering the Apple Watch, we analyze its underlying security architecture—including how sensitive health data is protected in transit from the watch to the phone.

In short, our paper makes the following contributions:

- (1) We analyze and document several previously unknown and widely deployed protocols used by the Apple Watch, thus opening them up to further security research.
- (2) We provide a tool suite for working with and analyzing the Apple Watch's proprietary protocols.
- (3) We demonstrate real-world interoperability using our open-source WatchWitch app, supporting several core smartwatch features and maintaining hardware-backed security.
- (4) We show usable privacy enhancements within WatchWitch, giving users more control of—and insight into—the intimate data their watch collects.
- (5) We analyze the security of the Apple Watch's wireless communication and discuss several vulnerabilities. The corresponding mitigations improve security for all users.

The source code of WatchWitch, with further tooling and a demo video, can be found at github.com/seemoo-lab/watchwitch.

Responsible Disclosure

We disclosed two vulnerabilities to Apple in November 2023. Apple acknowledged both vulnerabilities. They decided not to fix the first

der Heinrich, Matthias Hollick, and Jiska Classen

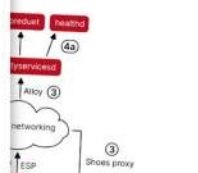
over the wireless link (Bluetooth or Wi-Fi) to the terminus daemon, which establishes a connection between the devices.

data for the established tunnel arrive the kernel networking stack. For Bluetooth packets arrive in NLRP payloads, and forwards them to the kernel.

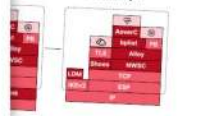
on Control Protocol (TCP) packets are forwarded to the terminus daemon for using the Shoes proxy and the identity service-to-device traffic using Alloy. The identity services daemon performs using the Message/Protection framework messages on to their destination. Process Communication (XPC) based

traffic, the terminus daemon passes the remote host using the phone's

link technology used, the higher-level as shown in Figure 2.

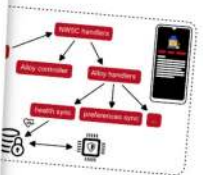


ing logic on iOS. Darker cells e communication, lighter cells related functionality.



tooth and Wi-Fi connections, are standardized open protocols, proprietary and largely undocumented health data (heart, all messages (arrows).

der Heinrich, Matthias Hollick, and Jiska Classen



internal components of the WatchWitch app. Incoming traffic is handled.

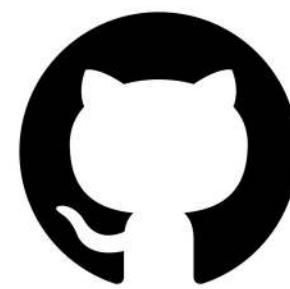
an app and tweak.⁴ At this point, the form the Wi-Fi discovery mechanism is restarted. It is no longer part of the watch and the Android phone. We replicate the protocol handling within our WatchWitch app (see Figure 9): IKEv2 messages to set up an IPsec tunnel and forwards them to the terminus. Internet-bound Shoes traffic's network connection, while Alloy and forwarded to service reimplementation message topics. requires root access to the phone to associated routing. We discuss these in Section 5.4.

of the foundational protocols discovered a base layer to build support for version of WatchWitch, we focus on: Receiving notifications, sharing health data.

Message Replies for Android Apps. on the Apple Watch—most notably page and other apps—internally use Distributor. The bulletin distributor encoded messages to the watch, the notifications present on the watch as well as the actions that can be taken, snoozing, or dismissing a reply on the watch. Additionally register as a notification when observes an incoming instant message), it generates a bulletin connected watch, instructing it to



Paper@PETS25
is.gd/wwpaper



Code@GitHub
is.gd/watchwitch

ONE
MORE
THING



bytewitch

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```
62706c6973743030da0102030405060708090a0b0c0d0e0f10111213145b6465766963652d6e616d655f1016656e63
72797074696f6e2d636c6173732d612d6b65795f1016656e6372797074696f6e2d636c6173732d632d6b6579577375
62797074696f6e2d636c6173732d632d6b6579577375
0B (0x0) 074696f6e2d6b657957636f6d6d616e645f1013707269766174652d6465766963652d64617461566 none
```

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bplist

"device-name" → "iPhone"

SEQUENCE length 246

ContextSpecific primitive type: 1 length 67

Type 0x00 Len: 65 (1 B, big endian)

Uncompressed secp256r1 X: 0x40514acb2ae8fe1164c96310e5023acf7723fb57e8baccf7f9f06800d56ee973 Y: 0xfd0961621b5f95690b7c36e53a1350ff08b8b8a4757f3f9d33e1701e99a7a02e

"encrypti
on-class-
a-key" →

ContextSpecific primitive type: 2 length 174

Type 0x00 Len: 172 (1 B, big endian)

SEQUENCE length 169

INTEGER length 161

0x00b2886f2a62c332ffd37b6084f2abd779d59a978c6574be1f0b395c3463de0ee9d90384008dfe663f087ffc34a134c682ff1efde777d12901c8eb7f0d0efd672425369c052ecc0e9f5c89bf658889b88e5a0681cdccb9a9bc6713708eda416ade19fac6029e52923932ddebdb0b245ff71b919a51d446193b3b09711fa92efc6f72c06eef18ed0d0ce13178aadfd48f1aaae32693ea155cb4c8162bcd1e5b19

INTEGER length 3 65537



bytewitch

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```
62706c69737431351367000000000000801200000000d478636c69656e744944756576656e747c70726f636573732d6e616d657973686
103B (0x67) 5710977e55494b69742d4b6579626f6172647f109156697375616c50616972696e674861636b74506f7374 hex
```

```
62706c697374313513c7000000000000801200000000a44776403a404040004f10ce61636b6e6f776c656467654f7574676f696e674d65
737361676557697468475549443a616c7465726e61746543616c6c6261636b49443a666f724163636f756e7457697468556e6971756549
443aa3108710881087a37f10a432303841303836302d373535392d343731362d424136352d434332363638334644413235407f10a43643
199B (0xc7) - selected 5B at offset 80 (0x50) 362d373143413545453336383930 hex
```

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SwiftSegFinder

S ☐ B

"bplist15" 1367 00000000000080 1200000000 d4 "xclientIDuevent|process-nameyshouldLog"
1097 "~UIKit-Keyboard" 7f 1091 "VisualPairingHacktPost"

SwiftSegFinder

S ☐ B

"bplist15" 13c7 00000000000080 1200000000a4 "Gv:@@@" 4f10ce
"acknowledgeOutgoingMessageWithGUID:alternateCallbackID:forAccountWithUniqueID:" a31087 108810
87a37f 10a4 "208A0860-7559-4716-BA65-CC26683FDA25@" 7f 10a4
"6C864327-6DAE-4A31-9A76-71CA5EE36890"

Byte Finder

click parsed elements to highlight source bytes below

62706c6973743135 1367000000000000 801200000000d478 636c69656e744944 756576656e747c70 726f636573732d6e 616d657973686f75 6c644c6f6710977e 55494b69742d4b65 79626f6172647f10 9156697375616c50 616972696e674861
636b74506f7374

bplist15.g.....xclientIDuevent.process-nameyshouldLog...UIKit-Keyboard...VisualPairingHacktPost



bytewitch

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```
01a70d0e13141b1f2055246e756c6cd20f1011125624636c6173735a6964656e7469666696572800380025f102753697269427574746f6e4964656e74696666965724c6f6e675072657373486f6d65427574746f6ed2151617185a24636c6173736e616d655824636c61737365735f101c534153427574746f6e4964656e74696666965725472616e73706f7274a2191a5f101c534153427574746f6e4964656e74696666965725472616e73706f7274584e534f626a656374d20f1c1d1e597472616e73706f727480068005233fd999999999999ad2151621225f101853415354
```

223B (0xdf)

hex



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randomness

Looks **highly non-random**. Entropy: 5.5/8b

Distribution of 2-bit words: non-random @ p<0.001

One bit counts per byte: non-random @ p<0.001

High bits: non-random @ p<0.001, run count non-random @ p<0.001, max run len=55 non-random @ p<0.001

Low bits: random, run count non-random @ p<0.001, max run len=9 random

Byte value runs: non-random @ p<0.001, max run len=55 non-random @ p<0.001

Byte Finder

click parsed elements to highlight source bytes below

```
01a70d0e13141b1f 2055246e756c6cd2 0f1011125624636c 6173735a6964656e 74696666965728003 80025f1027536972 69427574746f6e49 64656e74696666965 724c6f6e67507265 7373486f6d654275 74746f6ed2151617 185a24636c617373
6e616d655824636c 61737365735f101c 534153427574746f 6e4964656e746966 6965725472616e73 706f7274a2191a5f 101c534153427574 746f6e4964656e74 69666696572547261 6e73706f7274584e 534f626a656374d2 0f1c1d1e59747261
6e73706f72748006 8005233fd9999999 999999ad21516212 5f101853415354
```

```
.....
U$null.....V$classZidentifier.....'SiriButtonIdentifierLongPressHomeButton.....Z$classnameX$classes...SASButtonIdentifierTransport.....SASButtonIdentifierTransportXNSObject.....Ytransport....#.....!"...SAST
```



bytewitch

rec0de.net/open/bytewitch/

github.com/rec0de/bytewitch/

QUESTIONS!

let's keep in touch:

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github.com/seemoo-lab/watchwitch

