

Malware in Circulation on Android Can Drain your Bank Account and Wipe Your Phone

January 25, 2022 - A piece of malware that has been dubbed BRATA is now circulating and it has the ability to drain bank accounts and then wipe out your phone. It was discovered by Kaspersky Labs back in 2019, but didn't pose much of a threat outside of Brazil. But in December, another group of researchers discovered that it had made its way to Europe and is now targeting some European banks. And there is nothing to indicate that it won't make its way to the United States too.

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(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
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s.type = 'text/javascript';  
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';  
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);  
})();
```

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(function() {  
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;  
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
```

The way that BRATA can make its way onto your phone is by downloading apps from unsafe sources. So far, it hasn't been detected in apps on Google Play or from Amazon, but there are a wide variety of app stores available to Android users, and not all of them screen for malware. Android users can also download apps directly from virtually any website that provides them by changing some simple settings on the phone.

Once BRATA is on your phone, it can give cyber thieves access to your bank account information in background. It can be used to transfer all of the money in your accounts somewhere else and then, to cover its tracks, it will force your phone to do a factory reset. This wipes out anything stored on the phone, including your SD card, and there is absolutely nothing you can do to stop it. All of your contacts, pictures and documents will be gone.

There are a couple of things people can do to protect themselves. First, make sure that you use some form of anti-malware software that has been downloaded from a reliable source. And second, don't download apps from sources that you aren't 100% sure of. If you are a little more technical, you should also be backing up your phone's contents regularly. This can help you restore data if you do get victimized by BRATA or any other form of malware.

by Jim Malmberg

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