one aspect of

Security on JIT VMs

and more

~~Richie++~~ / richie / gera@corest.com

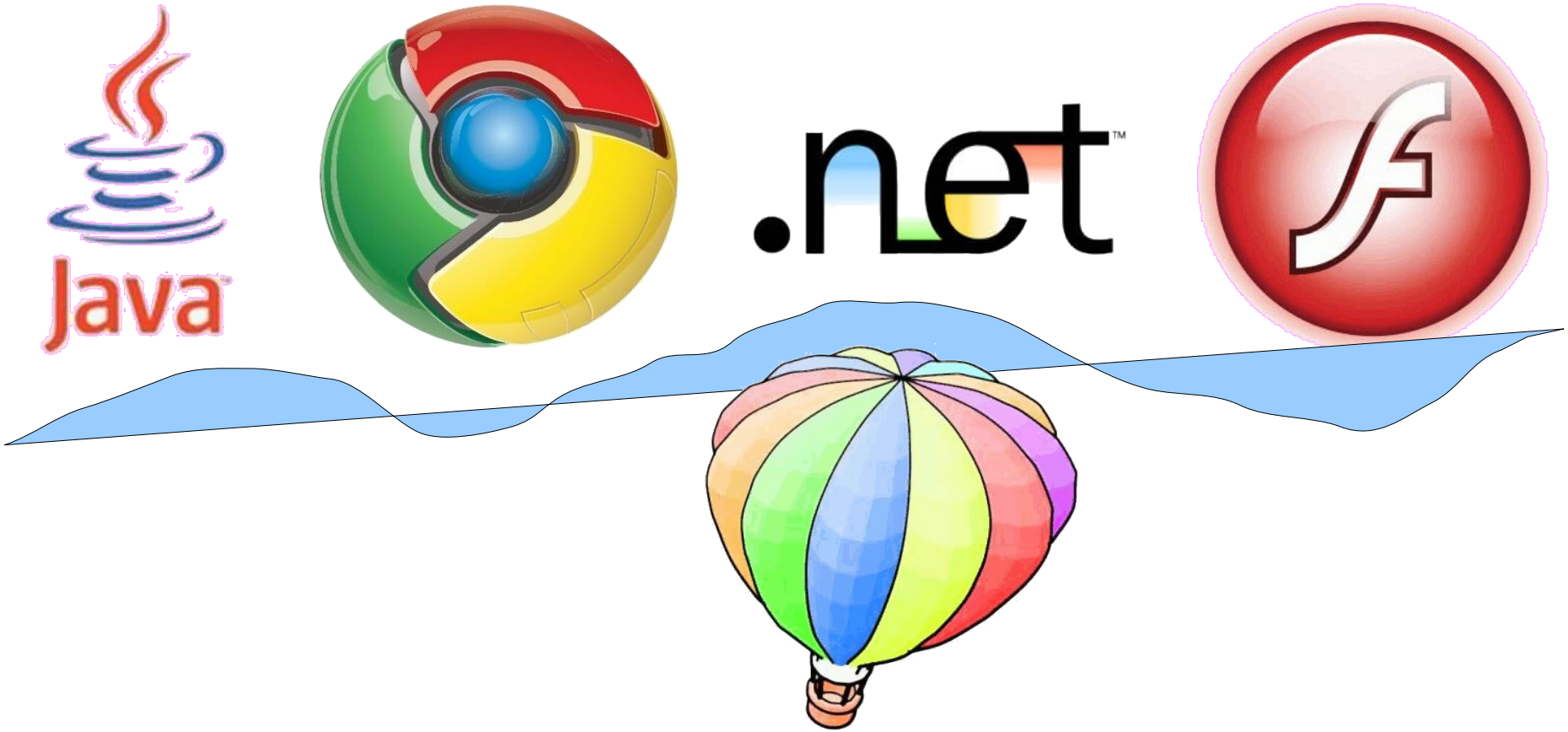
Security?

- Does you application need security?
- Do you do anything for its security?

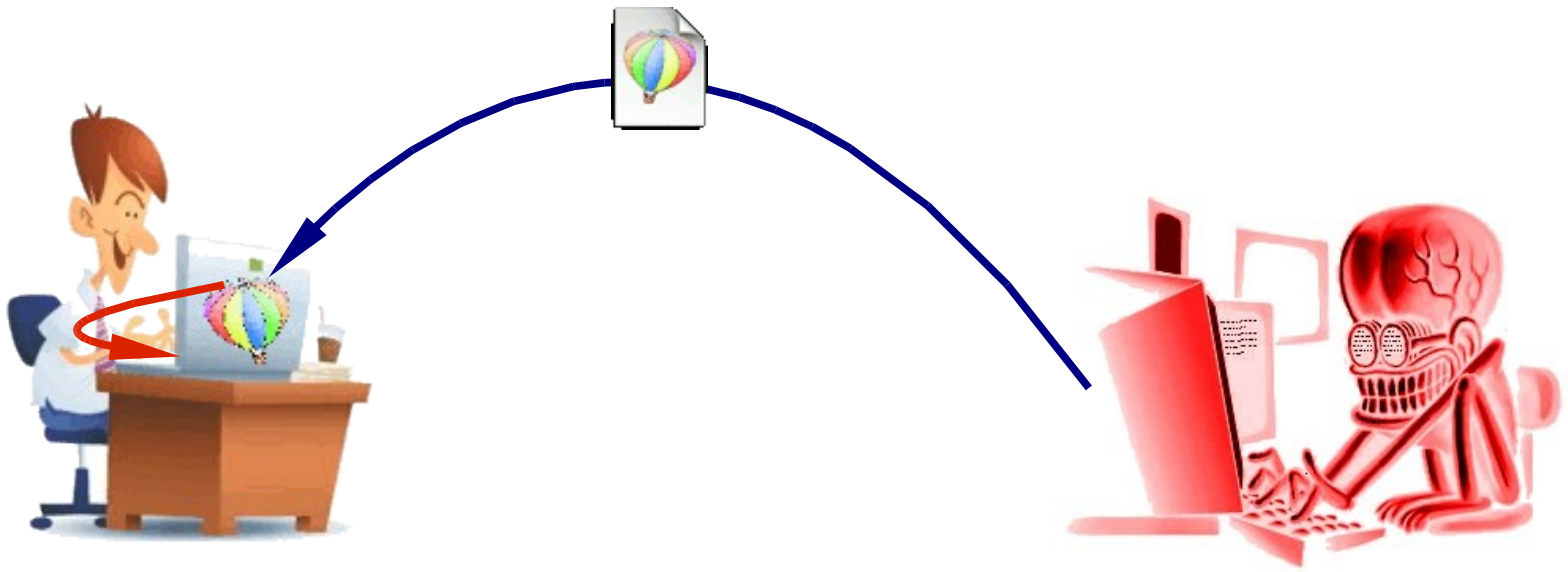
one aspect of

Security on JIT VMs

and more

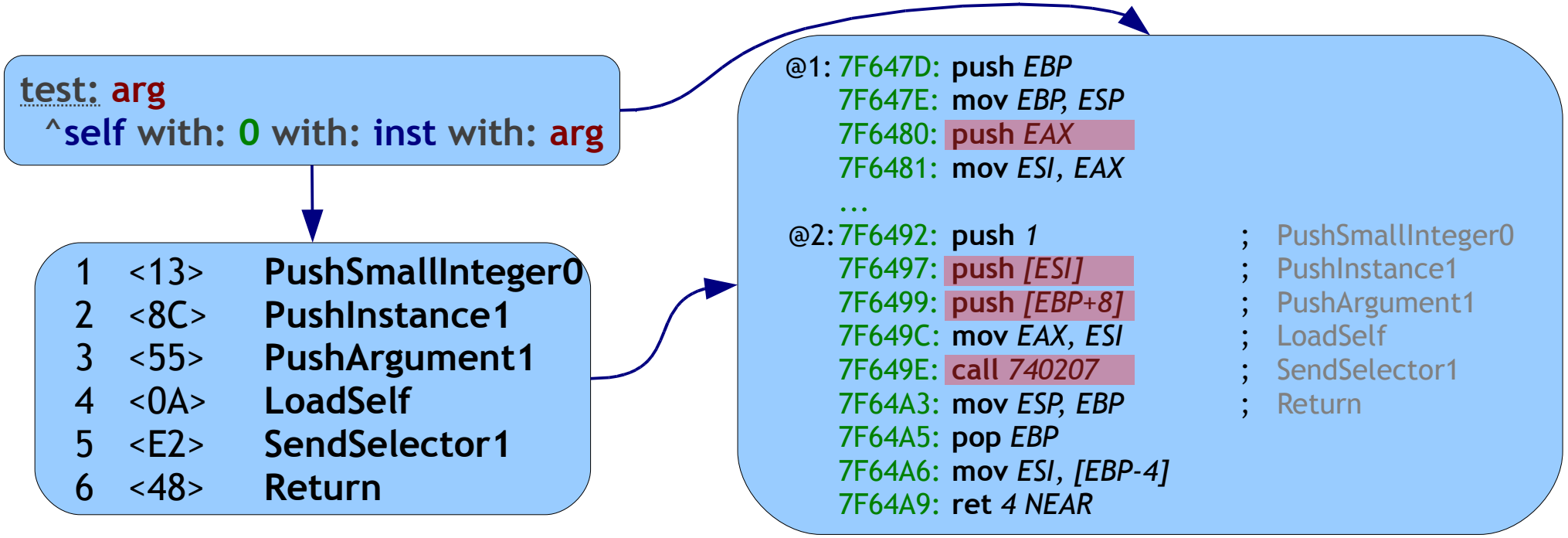


Scenario



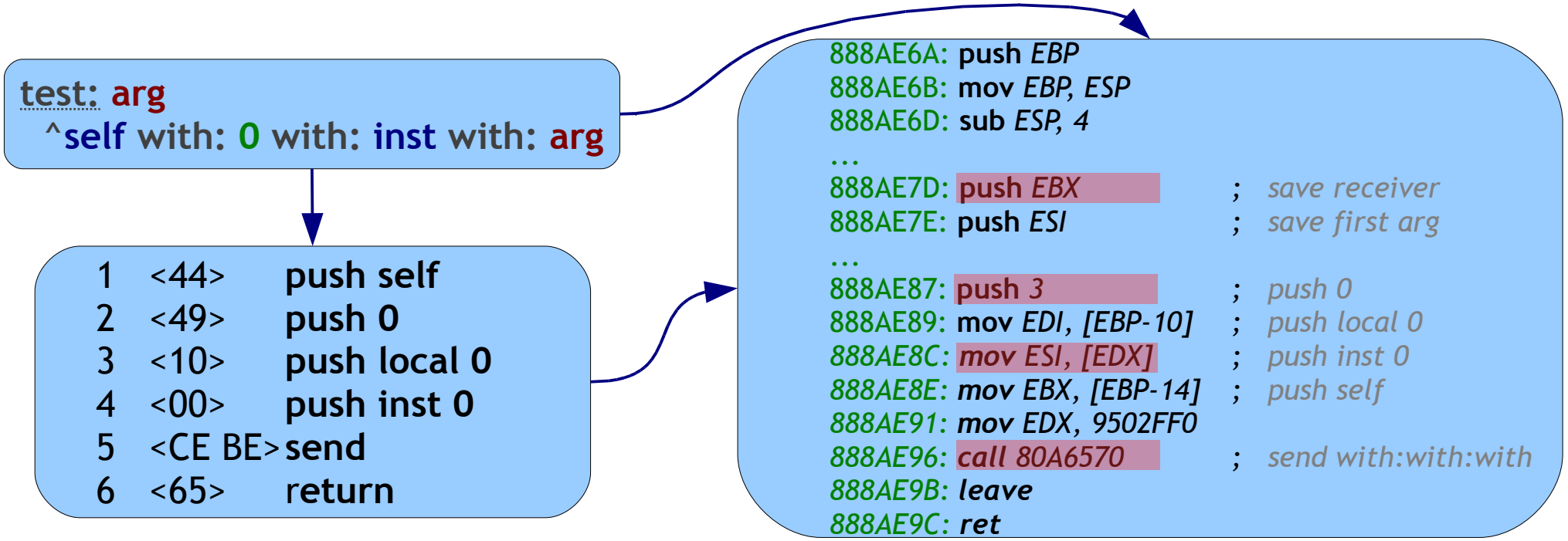
- VM installed on user's machine (your application)
- Attacker provides content (behavior)
- Attacker escapes VM restrictions (if any)
- Attacker accesses private information

nativizing VMs
Digitalk VS



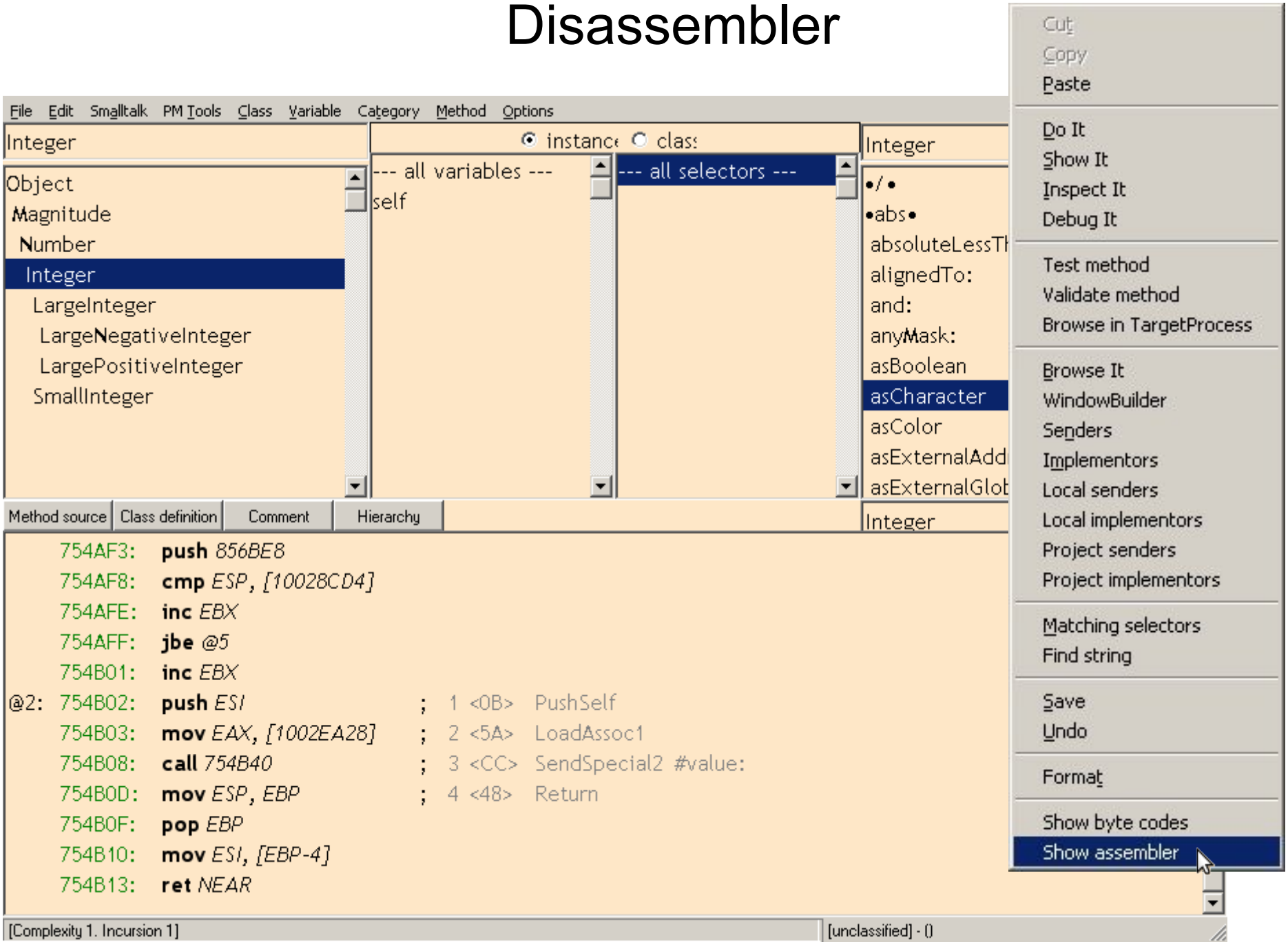
- Smalltalk stack == native stack
- Instance variables are accessed directly
- Contexts are stored in native stack

nativizing VMs
Cincom VW



- Smalltalk stack =~= native stack
  - First arguments go in registers
- Instance variables are accessed “directly” (some)
- Contexts are stored in native stack

Disassembler



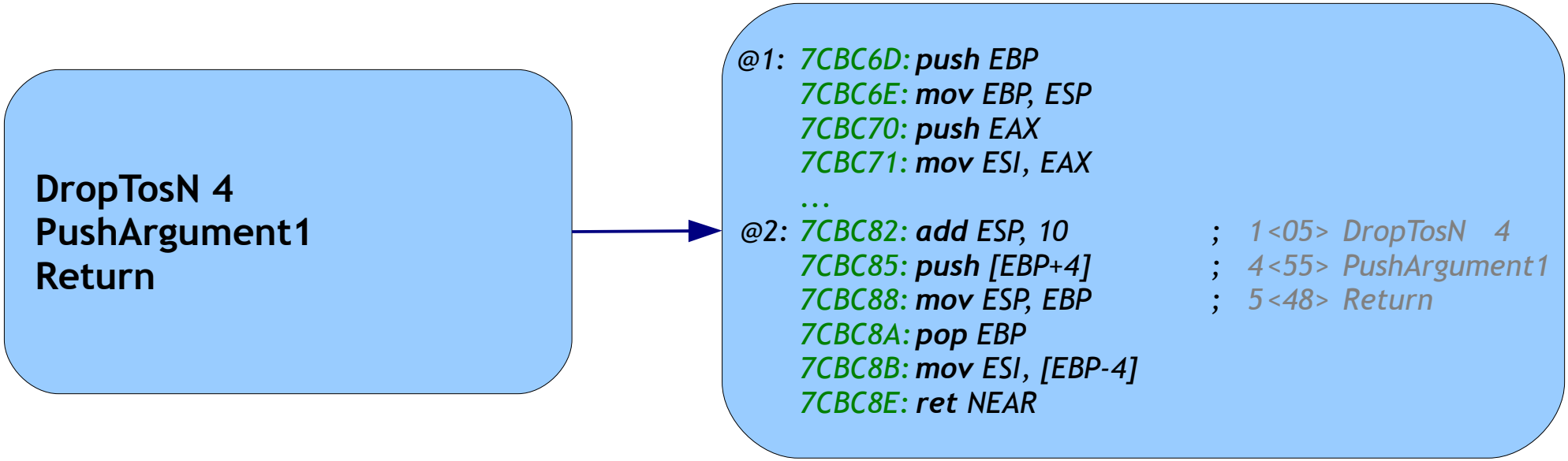
Conding in assembly stack operations

PushR
PushSmallInteger 2048
PushLiteral1/Assoc1
PushInstance1
PushTemporary1
PushArgument1
PushContextTemporary1
PopR
DropTos1
StoreTemporary1
NoFrameProlog

```
7EAFA2: push EAX              ; PushR
7EAFA3: push 1001             ; PushSmallInteger 2048
7EAFA8: push 1100000C         ; PushLiteral1
7EAFAD: push [ESI]            ; PushInstance1
7EAFAF: push [EBP-C]          ; PushTemporary1
7EAFB2: push [EBP+4]          ; PushArgument1
7EAFB5: push [EDI+18]         ; PushContextTemporary1
7EAFB8: pop EAX               ; PopR
7EAFB9: add ESP, 4            ; DropTos1
7EAFBC: mov [EBP-C], EAX      ; StoreTemporary1
7EAFBF: mov ESP, EBP          ; Return
```

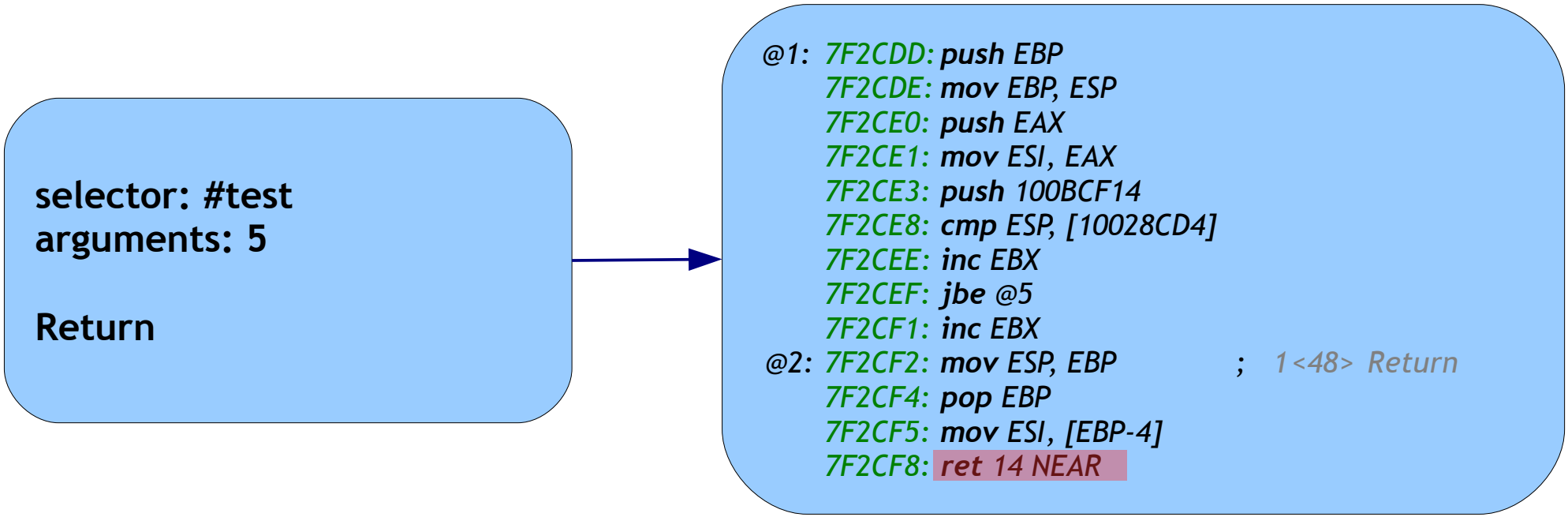
- **Push**: add arbitrary things to the stack
- **StoreTemporary**: random access to negative offsets
- **PopR, DropTos**: arbitrarily move the stack pointer
- **NoFrameProlog**: skips saving/restoring the FP and SP

Escaping Digitalk VM



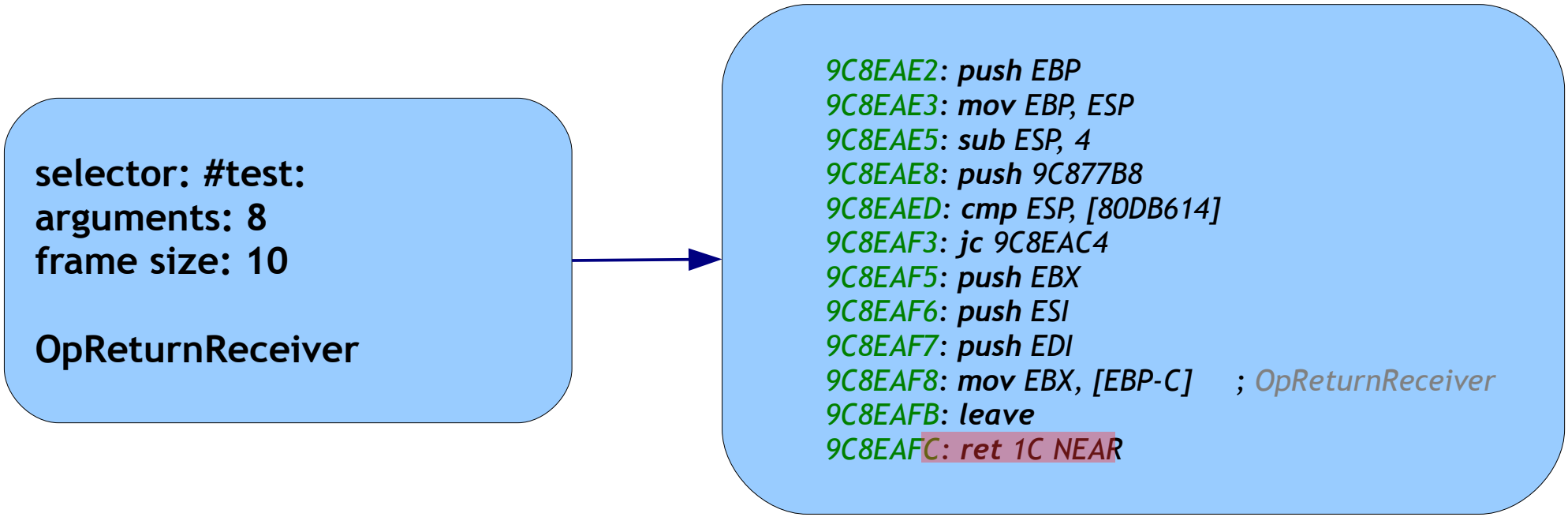
- Drop top of stack
- Overwrite return address with argument
- Return

Unbalancing the stack



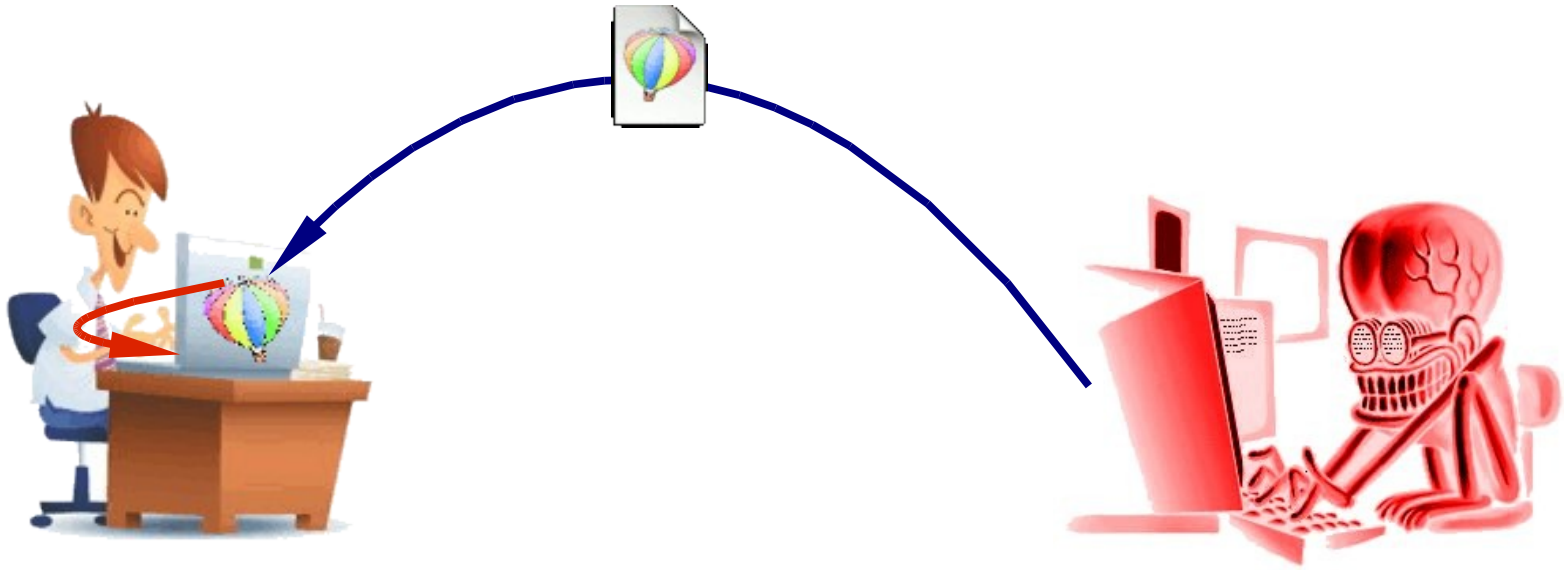
- Caller pushes no arguments
- Callee cleans 5 arguments, unbalances stack
- Caller can modify *protected* values (return address)

Escaping Cincom VM



- Caller pushes 1 argument
- Callee cleans 7 arguments, unbalances stack
- Caller can modify *protected* values (return address)

Attack layout



- Attacker transfers a CompiledMethod and activates it
- Attacker escapes the VM, and accesses the OS
- OS does not provide Application storage isolation
- Attacker gets stored passwords and credit cards

Securing Smalltalk (some ideas)

```
fileMeta := 0 class class class allInstances
    detect: [:metaClass |
      metaClass instanceClass name = 'File'].
fileMeta instanceClass openReadOnly: '...\savedPasswords'
```

- Reachability

```
File pathNameReadOnly: 'temporaryFile.dat'
```

```
File pathNameReadOnly: '...\savedPasswords'
```

- Sandboxing

```
PushR, PushR, DropTos2, Return
```

```
PushR, PushR, Return
```

- Verifier

- Are all three necessary?

Escaping Digitalk VM

```
SmallInteger >> #readMemory
    LoadInstance1
    Return
```

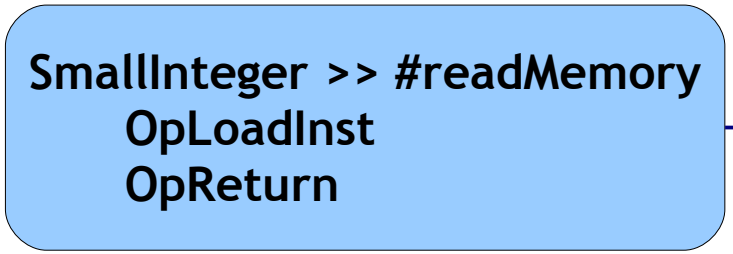
```
@2: 796DA2: mov EAX, [ESI]      ;  1 <7F>  LoadInstance1
    796DA4: mov ESP, EBP        ;  2 <48>  Return
    796DA6: pop EBP
    796DA7: mov ESI, [EBP-4]
    796DAA: ret 4 NEAR
```

```
SmallInteger >> #writeMemory:
    LoadArgument1
    StoreInstance1
    Return
```

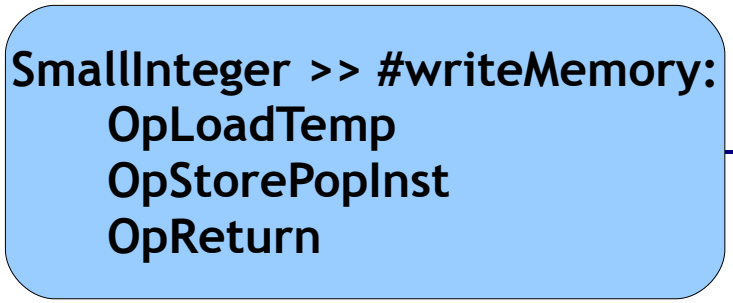
```
@2: 7FCA82: mov EAX, [EBP+8]    ;  1 <50>  LoadArgument1
    7FCA85: mov [ESI], EAX      ;  2 <96>  StoreInstance1
    7FCA87: call 1001AEA0
    7FCA8C: mov ESP, EBP        ;  3 <48>  Return
    7FCA8E: pop EBP
    7FCA8F: mov ESI, [EBP-4]
    7FCA92: ret 4 NEAR
```

- Arbitrary memory read
- Arbitrary memory write

Escaping Cincom VM




```
8EA1F09:mov EDX, [ESI]          ; OpStorePopInst
8EA1F0B:mov EBX, [EDX]
...
8EA1F20:leave                   ; OpReturn
8EA1F21:ret NEAR
```




```
8EA1F09:mov EDX, [ESI]          ; OpStorePopInst
8EA1F0B:mov [EDX], EBX
...
8EA1F20:leave                   ; OpReturn
8EA1F21:ret 4 NEAR
```

- Arbitrary memory read

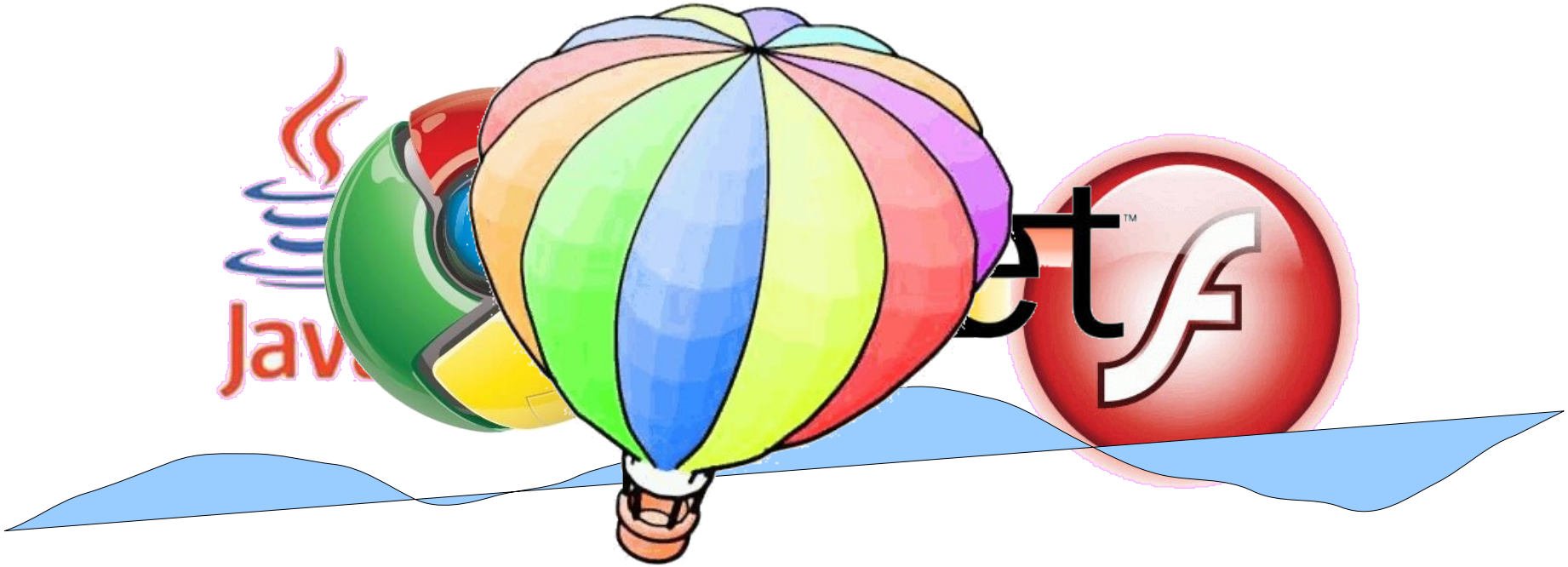
(#[0 0 0 16r78 16r56 16r34 16r12] copyToHeap asInteger / 4) readMemory

- Arbitrary memory write

```
[Audience  hasQuestions] whileTrue: [
    self answer: Audience nextQuestion]
```

Further understanding

better assessment



PushArgument2

Documenting Bytecodes

```
BytecodeNativizerPushR
  assembler pushR
```

```
Assembler >> #pushR
  self assembleByte: 16r50  " push eax "
```

```
BytecodeNativizerDropTos1
  assembler dropTos: 1

BytecodeNativizerDropTosN
  | idx |
  idx := self nextIndex.
  assembler dropTos: idx
```

```
Assembler >> #dropTos: index
  self   " sub esp, index * 4 "
    assemble: #[16r83 16rC4];
    assembleByte: index * 4
```

```
BytecodeNativizerLoadInstN
  assembler loadFromInstance:
    self nextIndex
```

```
Assembler >> #loadFromInstance: index
  " We need mov eax, [esi + index*4] "
  self assembleByte: 16r8B.
  index = 1 ifTrue: [^self reg: 0 mod: 0 rm: 6].
  index abs > 31
    ifTrue: [
      self reg: 0 mod: 2 rm: 6.
      self assembleLong: index - 1 * 4]
    ifFalse: [...]
```

Testing Bytecodes

Templates

```
loadInstance1
  "
  1   <7F>  LoadInstance1
  2   <48>  Return
  "
     | a |
     ^testSelector
```

```
loadInstanceNoProlog1
  "
  1    <02>  NoFrameProlog
  2   <7F>  LoadInstance1
  3   <48>  Return
  "
  ^testSelector
```

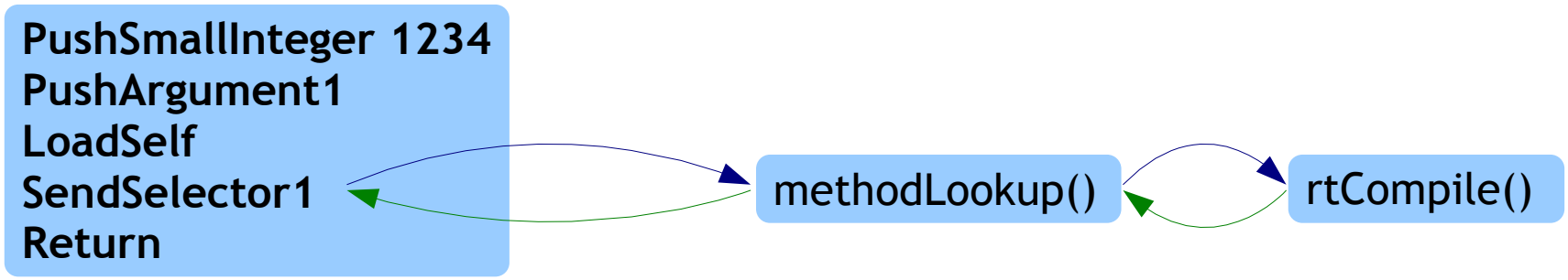
Test

```
testSameAsOriginal: cm
   | original documentation |
   original := CompiledMethodNativizer
        originalNativize: cm.
   documentation := CompiledMethodNativizer
        nativize: cm.
   self assert: original == documentation
```

```
shortForwardTestJumpFalse
   "
1   <0E>  LoadTrue
2   <1B>  TestJumpFalse   6
5   <14>  LoadSmallInteger1
6   <49>  ReturnSelf
   "
      true ifTrue: [1].
```

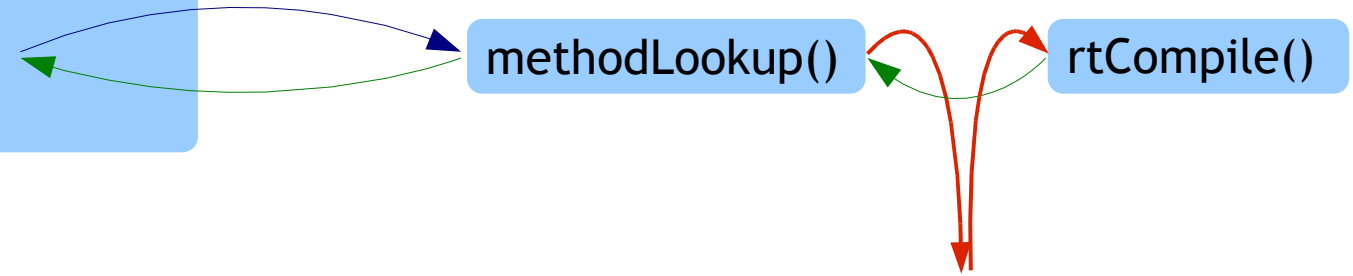
So far so good... but does the generated code work?

Two worlds unite



Two worlds unite

```
PushSmallInteger 1234
PushArgument1
LoadSelf
SendSelector1
Return
```

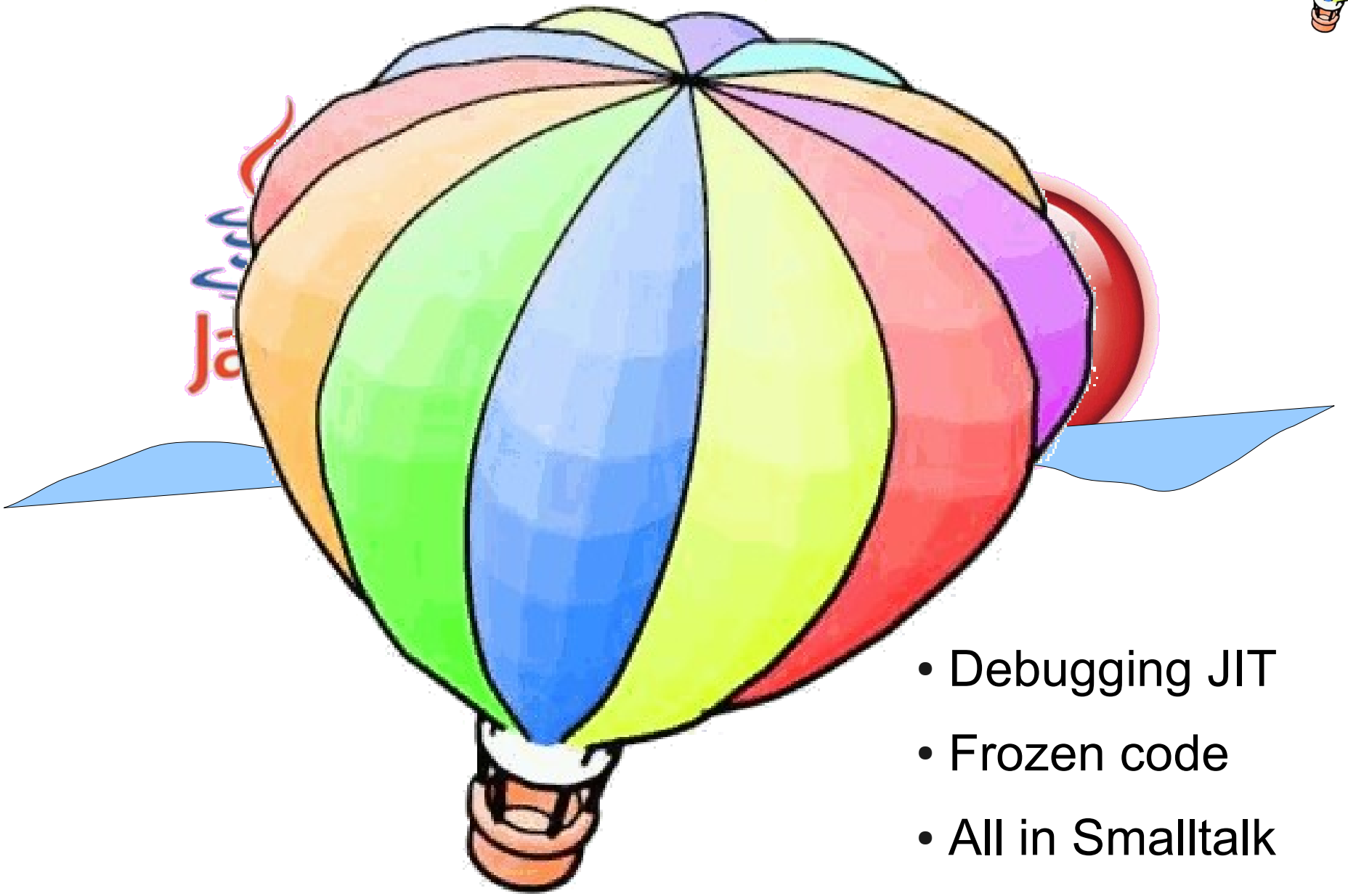



```
rtCompile: aCompiledMethod
  Transcript
    show: 'got callback ';
    Show: aCompiledMethod printString; cr
    cr.

  aCompiledMethod selector = #testMethod ifTrue: [
    ^self nativize: aCompiledMethod].

  ^0
```

What's next?



- Debugging JIT
- Frozen code
- All in Smalltalk

```
[Audience hasQuestions] whileTrue: [
    self answer: Audience nextQuestion].

Audience do: [:you | self thank: you].

self returnTo: Audience
```

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Security on JIT VMs

and more

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- We understand why it's important that all this VMs have security: We use most of them every day in some way or another, and through them we extend our trust to untrusted mobile code applications from we download from unknown sources.
- They have all gone, directly or indirectly, through some security audits and, one way or another, their developers today care about security issues.
- Smalltalk has grown as the very open "socialist" environment we all love, were we just trust everybody. The VMs developers community has not really payed much attention to security (not at least from a mobile code perspective)
- Time has come for mobile code to also reach Smalltalk (browser plugins, Croquet objects with their own behavior, Scratch/EToys projects, seaside hosting)

Security?

- Does you application need security?
- Do you do anything for its security?

2

- Any application installed on a computer can open the door to an attacker, in our scenario we are assuming mobile code (maybe embedded in other type of content)
- The VM is supposed to provide some sandboxing, if the sandboxing can be broken the trust chain can be abused:
  - the user trusts the VM
  - the VM trusts/verifies the mobile code
  - the mobile code fools the VM

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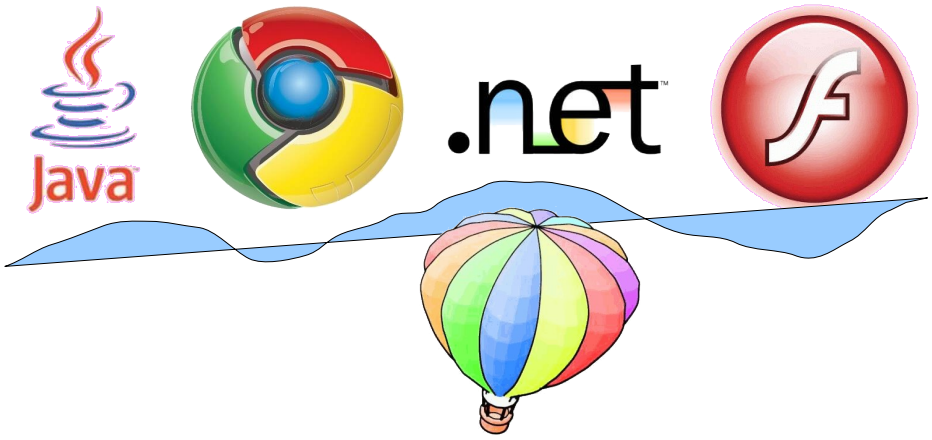

3

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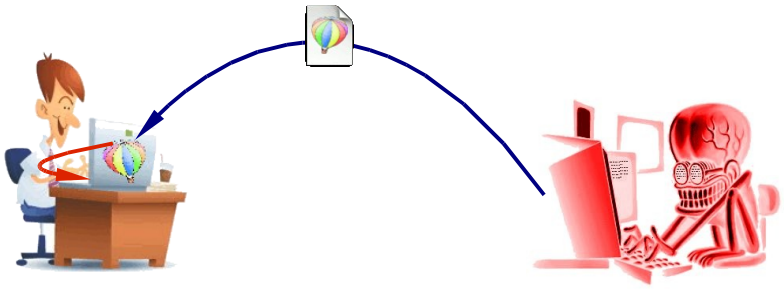
Scenario



- VM installed on user's machine (your application)
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- Attacker accesses private information

4

- Any application installed on a computer can open the door to an attacker, in our scenario we are assuming mobile code (maybe embedded in other type of content)
- The VM is supposed to provide some sandboxing, if the sandboxing can be broken the trust chain can be abused:
  - the user trusts the VM
  - the VM trusts/verifies the mobile code
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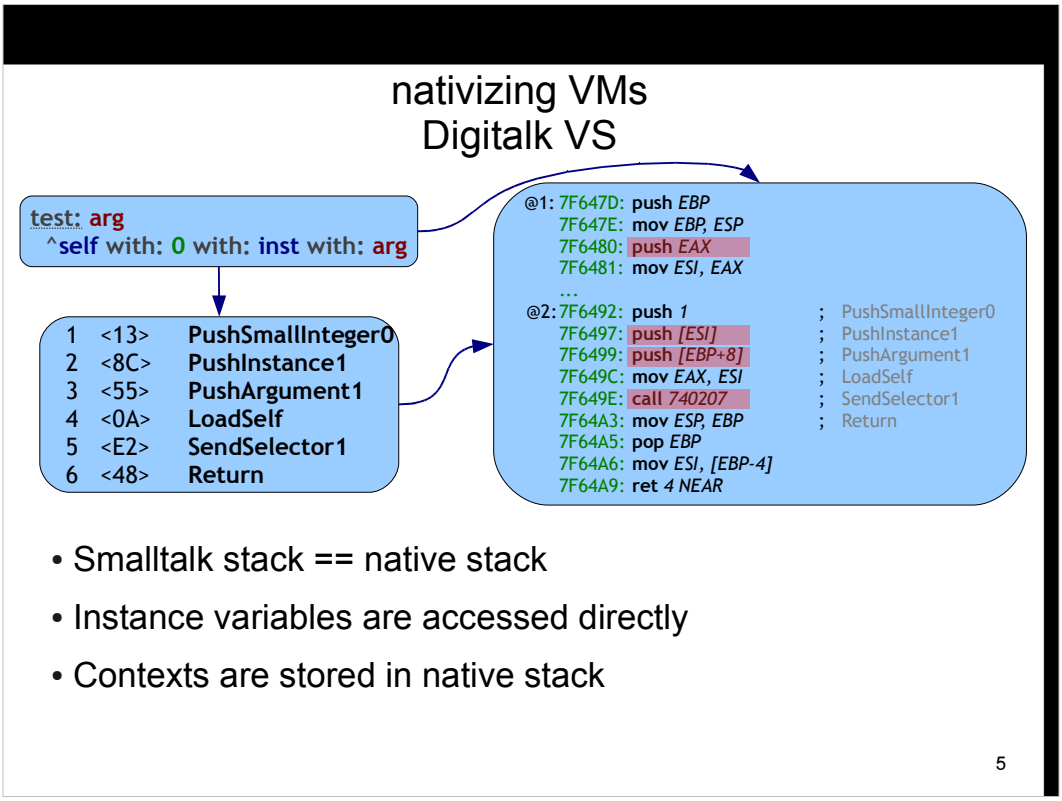
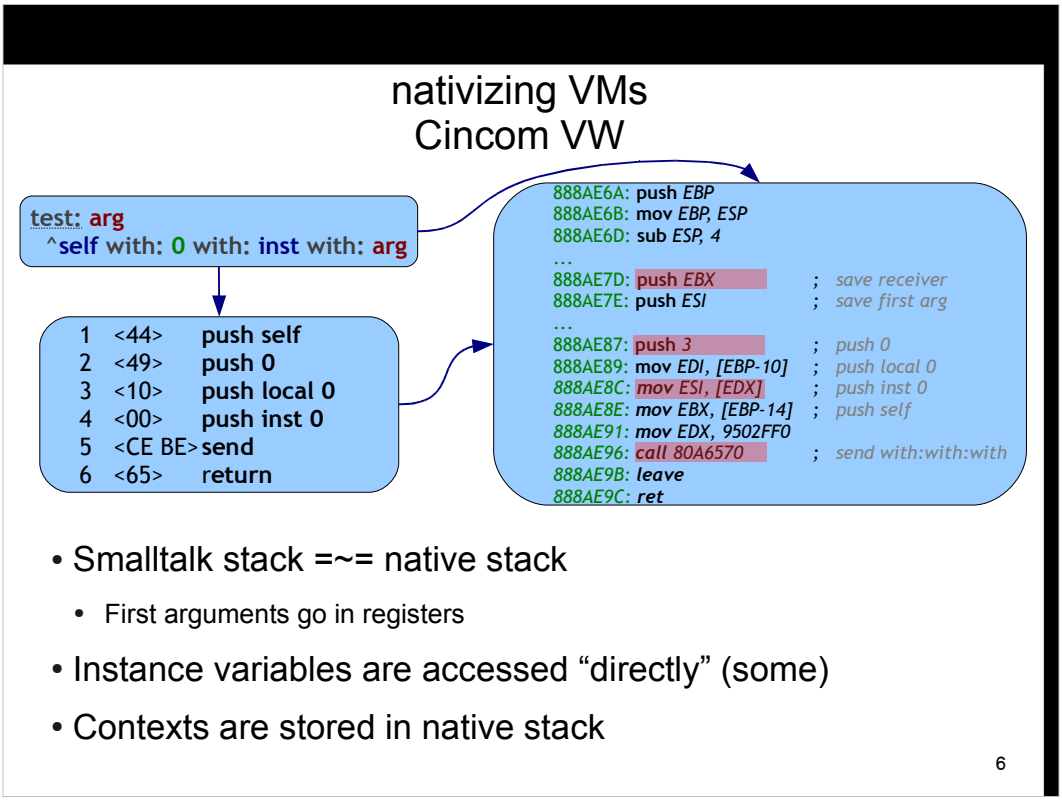
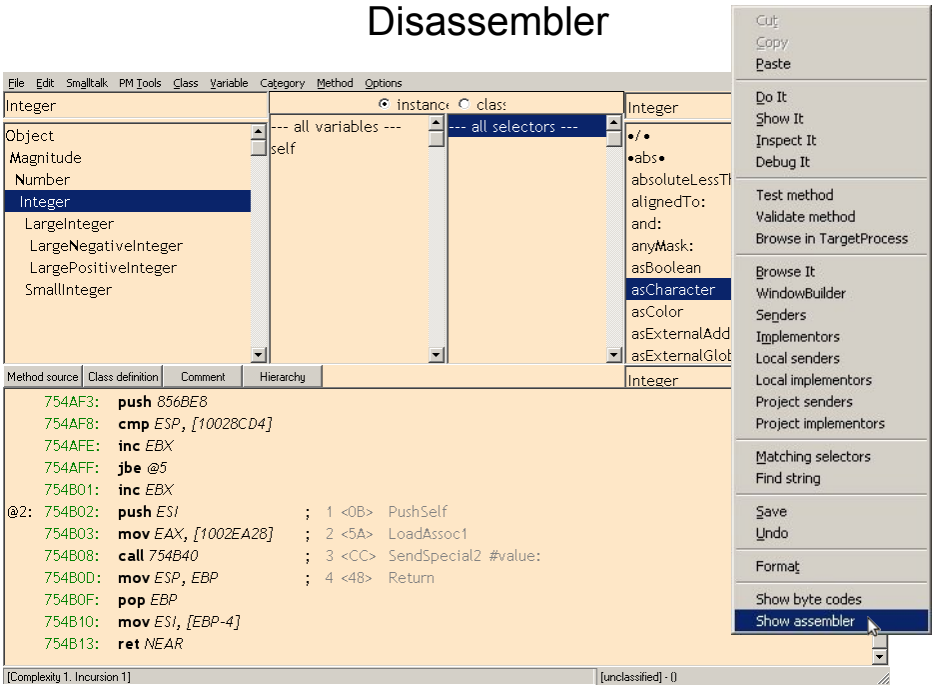


- Smalltalk is compiled to Bytecode
- Bytecode is nativized
- Smalltalk is directly compiled to Assembly
- Here we can see
    - Smalltalk stack is kept in the native stack (push nativized to push)
    - Contexts are normal native stack frames
        - return addresses managed through native call/ret
        - Arguments are accessed through the native frame pointer
        - Local variables are accessed through the native frame pointer
        - The receiver is saved in a local
    - Instance variables are accessed with direct memory accesses without any checks
- If we could arbitrarily access any indexed argument we could corrupt the return address or saved receiver (from other frames)

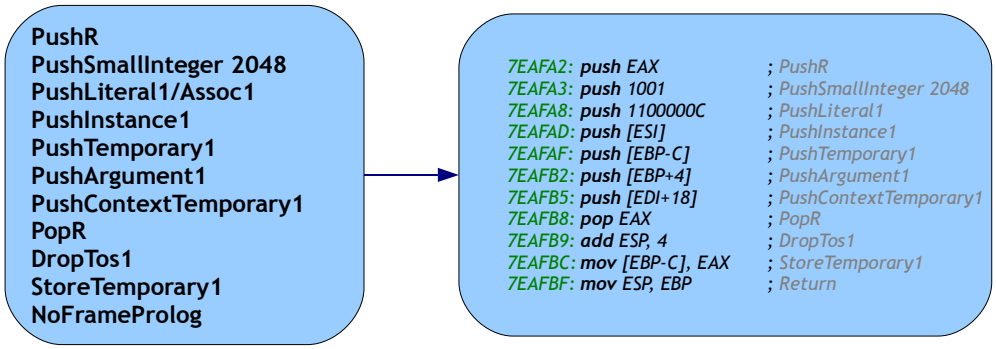


- Here we can see
  - Smalltalk stack is kept in the native stack (push nativized to push)
  - Contexts are normal native stack frames
    - return addresses managed through native call/ret
    - after 3 args they accessed through the native frame pointer
    - Local variables are accessed through the native frame pointer
    - The receiver is saved in a local
  - Some instance variables are accessed with direct memory accesses without any checks, some are accessed through a routing that MAY do checks.
- If we could arbitrarily write any indexed argument we could corrupt the return address, saved receiver or locals (from other frames)
- If we could arbitrarily manipulate any indexed instance variable we could corrupt the object space

Disassembler

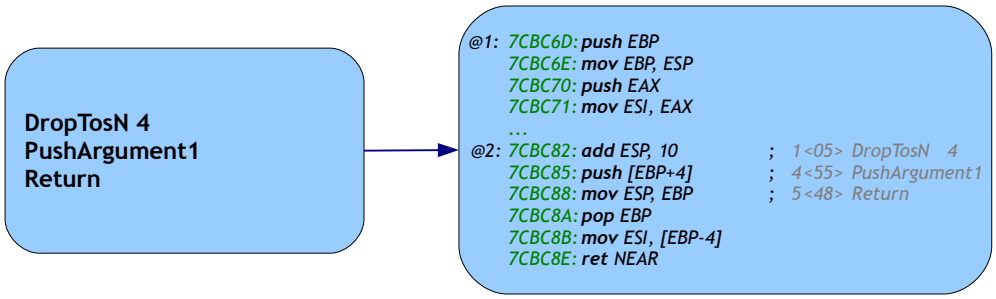


Conding in assembly stack operations



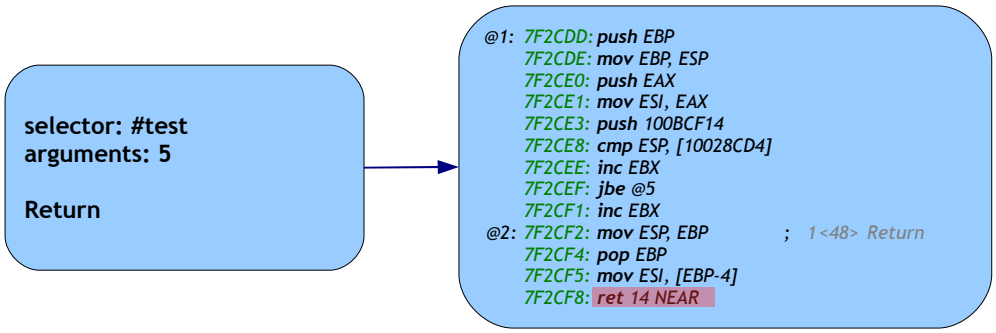
- **Push**: add arbitrary things to the stack
- **StoreTemporary**: random access to negative offsets
- **PopR, DropTos**: arbitrarily move the stack pointer
- **NoFrameProlog**: skips saving/restoring the FP and SP

Escaping Digitalk VM



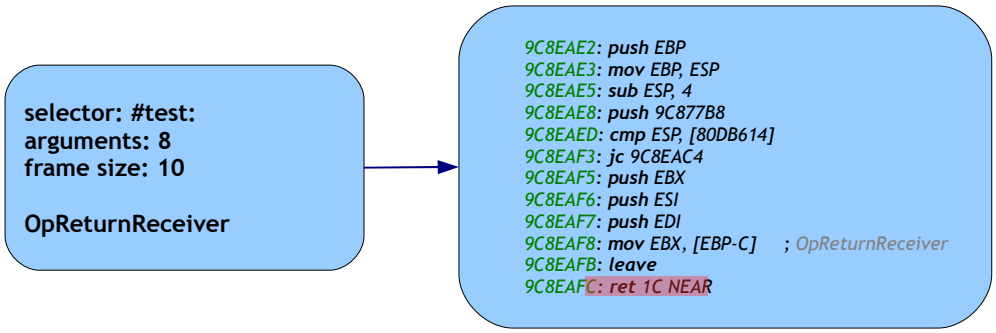
- Drop top of stack
- Overwrite return address with argument
- Return

Unbalancing the stack



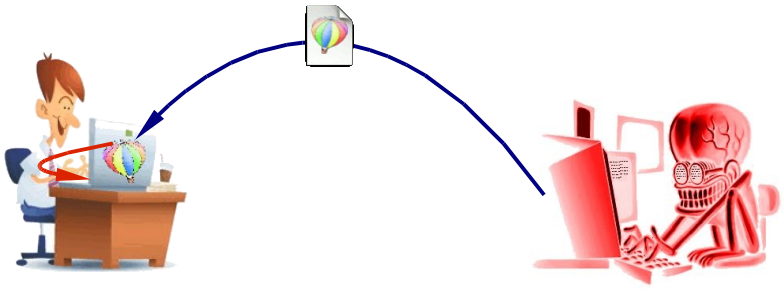
- Caller pushes no arguments
- Callee cleans 5 arguments, unbalances stack
- Caller can modify *protected* values (return address)

Escaping Cincom VM

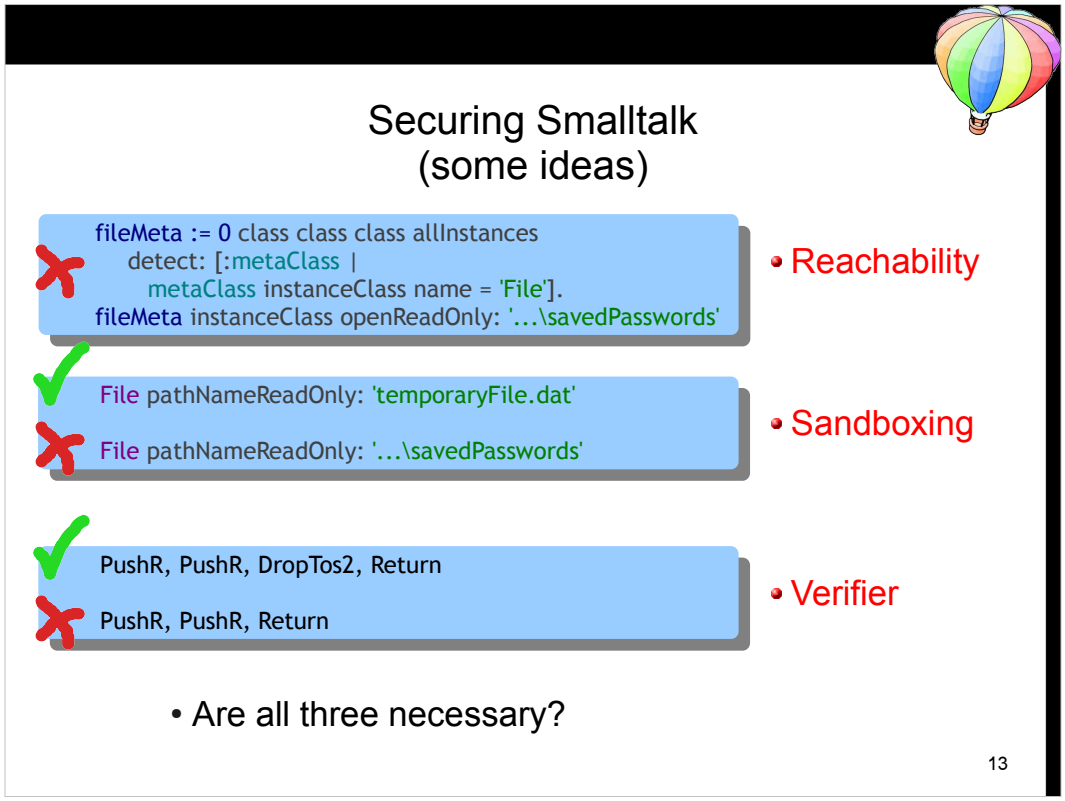


- Caller pushes 1 argument
- Callee cleans 7 arguments, unbalances stack
- Caller can modify *protected* values (return address)

Attack layout



- Attacker transfers a CompiledMethod and activates it
- Attacker escapes the VM, and accesses the OS
- OS does not provide Application storage isolation
- Attacker gets stored passwords and credit cards



- In a fully dynamic and reflective system reachability is hard to constrain
- Sandboxing, ACL or permissions must be implemented in the VM itself. They could be bypassed, most likely, if implemented in the image.
- A bytecode verifier is mandatory in any kind of nativizing VM, and strict checks are also required in an interpreter.

Escaping Digitalk VM

```
SmallInteger >> #readMemory
    LoadInstance1
    Return
```

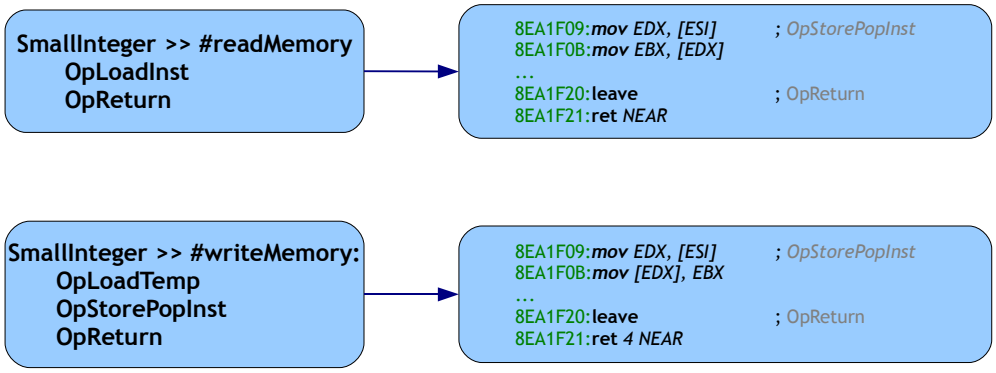
```
@2: 796DA2: mov EAX, [ESI]      ; 1 <7F> LoadInstance1
    796DA4: mov ESP, EBP        ; 2 <48> Return
    796DA6: pop EBP
    796DA7: mov ESI, [EBP-4]
    796DAA: ret 4 NEAR
```

```
SmallInteger >> #writeMemory:
    LoadArgument1
    StoreInstance1
    Return
```

```
@2: 7FCA82: mov EAX, [EBP+8]    ; 1 <50> LoadArgument1
    7FCA85: mov [ESI], EAX      ; 2 <96> StoreInstance1
    7FCA87: call 1001AEA0
    7FCA8C: mov ESP, EBP        ; 3 <48> Return
    7FCA8E: pop EBP
    7FCA8F: mov ESI, [EBP-4]
    7FCA92: ret 4 NEAR
```

- Arbitrary memory read
- Arbitrary memory write

Escaping Cincom VM



- Arbitrary memory read

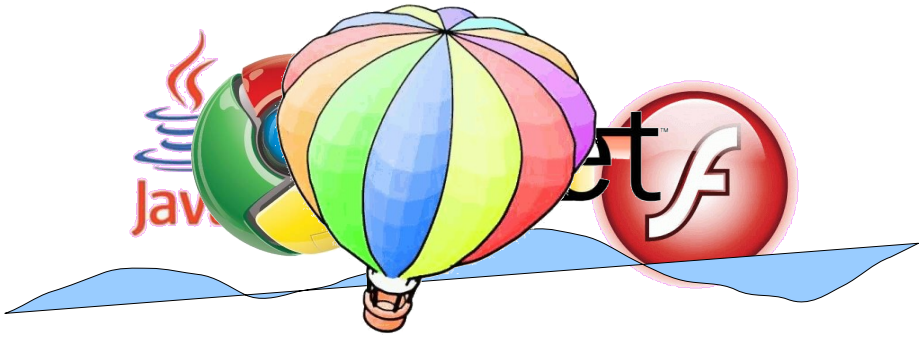
(#[0 0 0 16r78 16r56 16r34 16r12] copyToHeap asInteger / 4) readMemory

- Arbitrary memory write

```
[Audience  hasQuestions] whileTrue: [
    self answer: Audience nextQuestion]
```

Further understanding

better assessment



PushArgument2

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- Just randomly looking how each bytecode is nativized is not enough to asses the security of the system, we need to understand all possible variations for each bytecode.

- So we need to understand and document the workings of the JIT nativizer, and what better documentation that something which can be debugged. So, as we all learned long time ago with the original specification of the Smalltalk VM, we started documenting not in .doc, but in .st

Documenting Bytecodes

```
BytecodeNativizerPushR
  assembler pushR
```

```
Assembler >> #pushR
  self assembleByte: 16r50 " push eax "
```

```
BytecodeNativizerDropTos1
  assembler dropTos: 1

BytecodeNativizerDropTosN
  | idx |
  idx := self nextIndex.
  assembler dropTos: idx
```

```
Assembler >> #dropTos: index
  self   " sub esp, index * 4 "
    assemble: #[16r83 16rC4];
    assembleByte: index * 4
```

```
BytecodeNativizerLoadInstN
  assembler loadFromInstance:
    self nextIndex
```

```
Assembler >> #loadFromInstance: index
  " We need mov eax, [esi + index*4] "
  self assembleByte: 16r8B.
  index = 1 ifTrue: [^self reg: 0 mod: 0 rm: 6].
  index abs > 31
    ifTrue: [
      self reg: 0 mod: 2 rm: 6.
      self assembleLong: index - 1 * 4]
    ifFalse: [...]
```

Testing Bytecodes

Templates

```
loadInstance1
  "
  1   <7F>  LoadInstance1
  2   <48>  Return
  "
     | a |
     ^testSelector
```

```
loadInstanceNoProlog1
  "
  1    <02> NoFrameProlog
  2   <7F>  LoadInstance1
  3   <48>  Return
  "
  ^testSelector
```

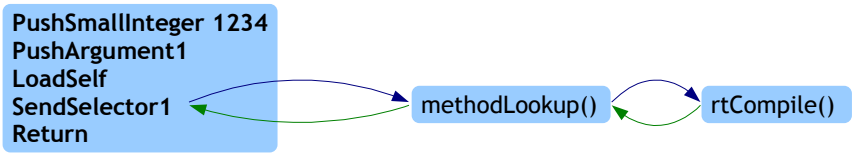
Test

```
testSameAsOriginal: cm
   | original documentation |
  original := CompiledMethodNativizer
       originalNativize: cm.
  documentation := CompiledMethodNativizer
       nativize: cm.
  self assert: original == documentation
```

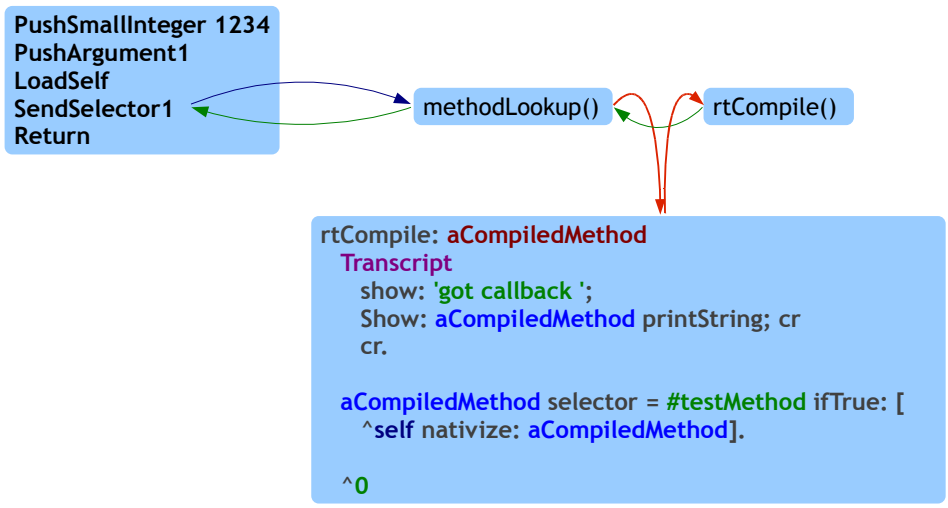
```
shortForwardTestJumpFalse
   "
1   <0E>  LoadTrue
2   <1B>  TestJumpFalse   6
5   <14>  LoadSmallInteger1
6   <49>  ReturnSelf
   "
      true ifTrue: [1].
```

So far so good... but does the generated code work?

Two worlds unite



Two worlds unite



What's next?

- Debugging JIT
- Frozen code
- All in Smalltalk

```
[Audience hasQuestions] whileTrue: [
   self answer: Audience nextQuestion].

Audience do: [:you | self thank: you].

self returnTo: Audience
```