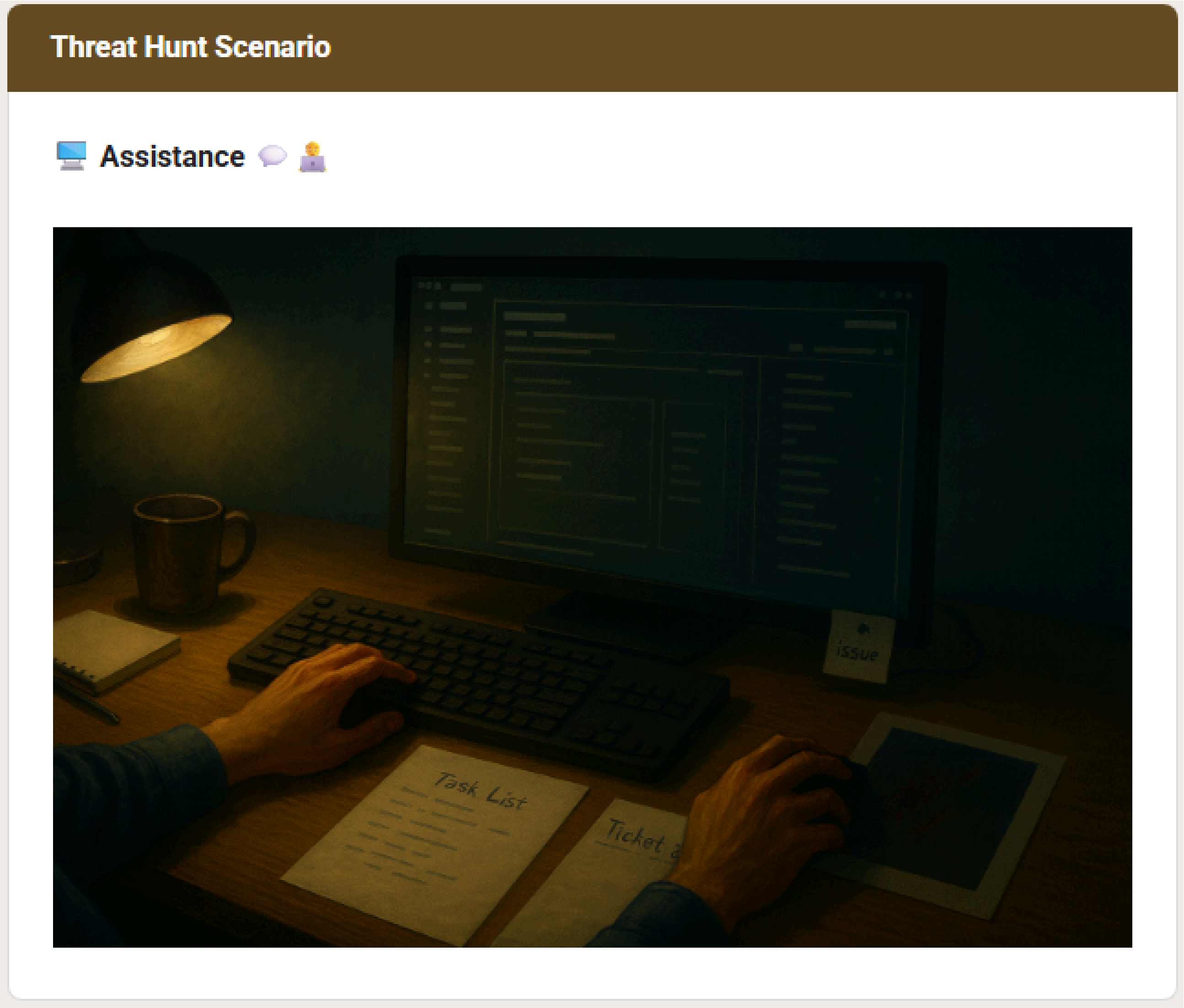
Threat Hunt Scenario - Assistance



Threat Hunt Scenario

🖥️ Assistance 💭 👩‍💻

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MITRE ATT&CK Framework:

- Flags → MITRE ATT&CK Mapping Table
- Summary of ATT&CK Categories Used

Lessons Learned:

- 🔒 **1. Strengthen PowerShell Logging & Restrictions**
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- 🔍 **3. Harden Scheduled Task Abuse**
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- 🔐 **8. Least Privilege Enforcement**
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Report By

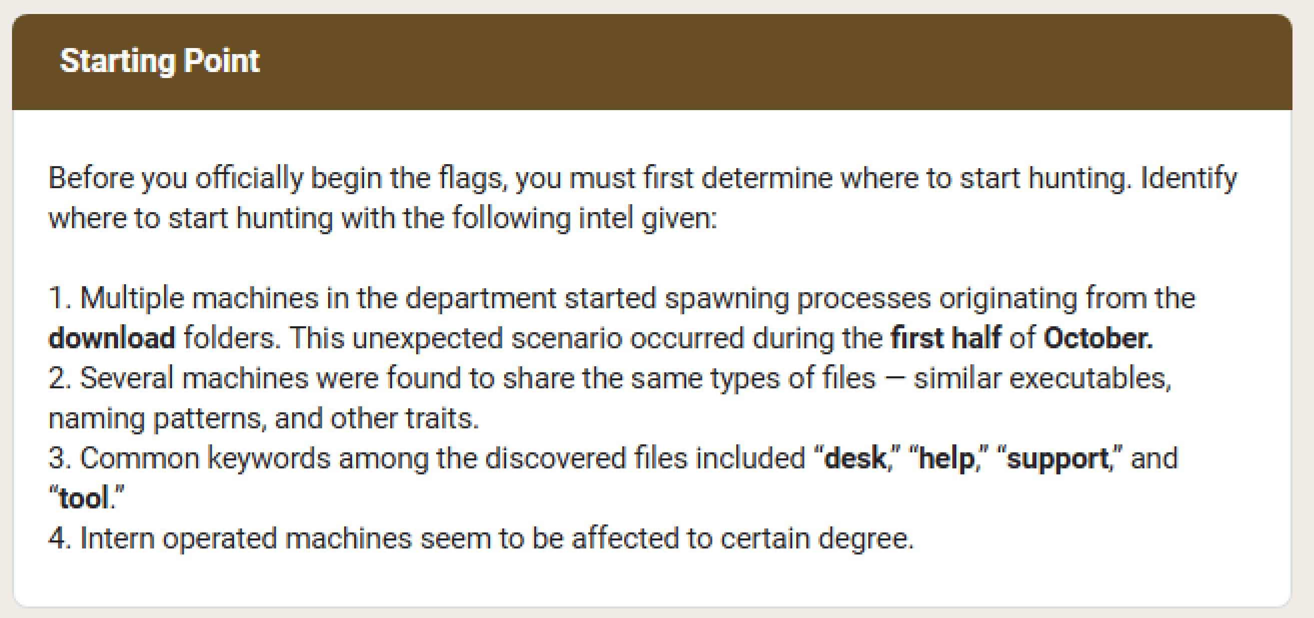
```
**Date:** October 1st - 15th, 2025
**Analyst:** Grisham DelRosario
**Environment:** Microsoft - Log Analytics Workspace (LAW - Cyber Range)
**Attack Type:** Fake Remote Session/Malicious Help Desk
```

Scenario

```
A routine support request should have ended with a reset and reassurance. Instead, the so-
called "help" left behind a trail of anomalies that don't add up. What was framed as
troubleshooting looked more like an audit of the system itself probing, cataloging, leaving
subtle traces in its wake. Actions chained together in suspicious sequence: first gaining a
foothold, then expanding reach, then preparing to
```

linger long after the session ended. And just when the activity should have raised questions, a neat explanation appeared — a story planted in plain sight, designed to justify the very behavior that demanded scrutiny. This wasn't remote assistance. It was a misdirection. Your mission this time is to reconstruct the timeline, connect the scattered remnants of this "support session", and decide what was legitimate, and what was staged. The evidence is here. The question is whether you'll see through the story or believe it.

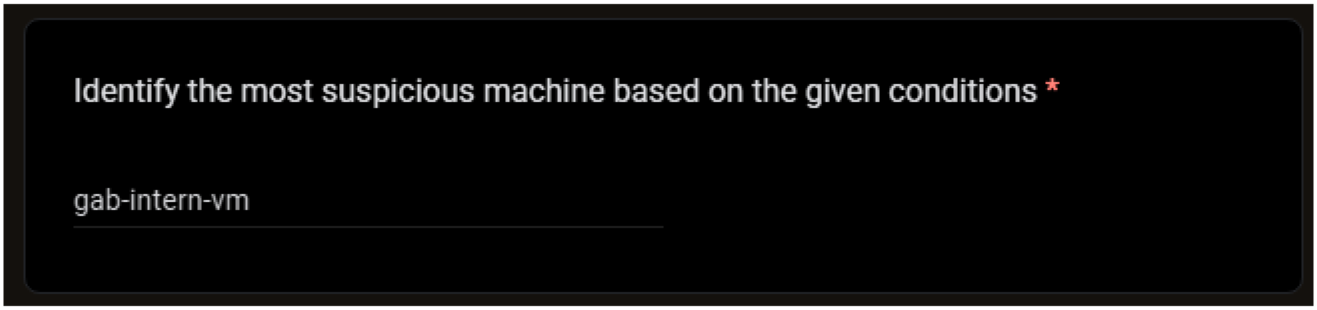
Preparation



Starting Point

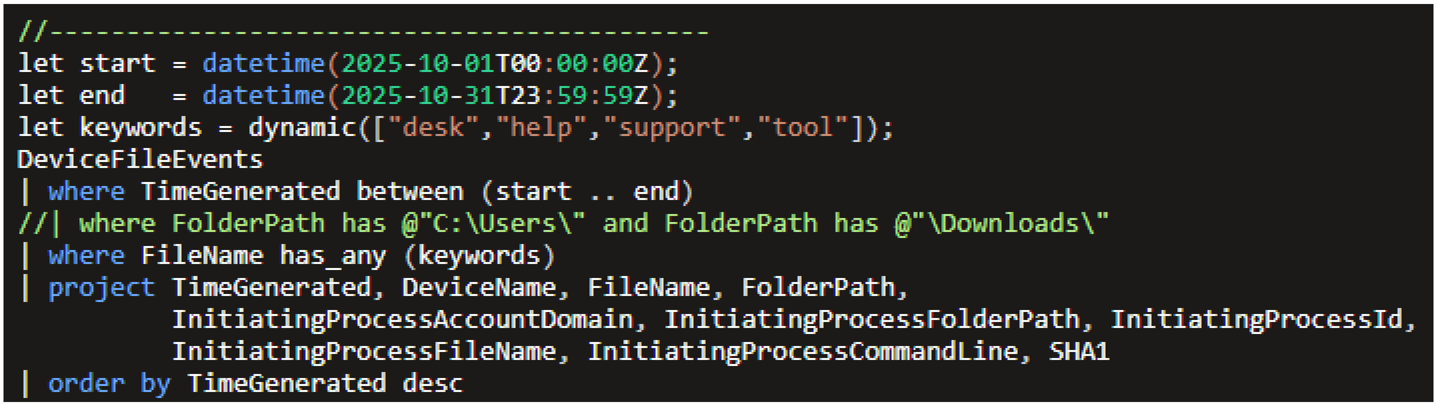
Before you officially begin the flags, you must first determine where to start hunting. Identify where to start hunting with the following intel given:

1. Multiple machines in the department started spawning processes originating from the **download** folders. This unexpected scenario occurred during the **first half** of **October.**
2. Several machines were found to share the same types of files — similar executables, naming patterns, and other traits.
3. Common keywords among the discovered files included “**desk**,” “**help**,” “**support**,” and “**tool**.”
4. Intern operated machines seem to be affected to certain degree.



Identify the most suspicious machine based on the given conditions *

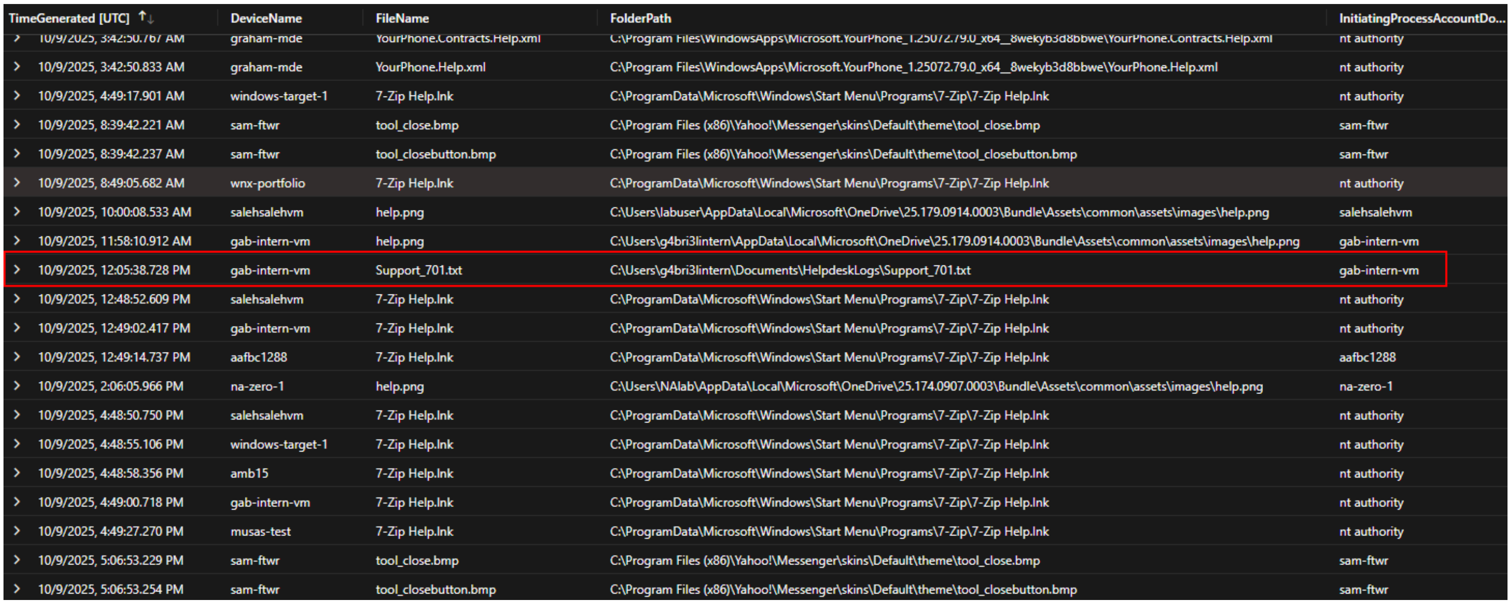
gab-intern-vm



```
//---------------------------------------------
let start = datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z);
let end   = datetime(2025-10-31T23:59:59Z);
let keywords = dynamic(["desk","help","support","tool"]);
DeviceFileEvents
| where TimeGenerated between (start .. end)
//| where FolderPath has @"C:\Users\" and FolderPath has @"\Downloads\"
| where FileName has_any (keywords)
| project TimeGenerated, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath,
          InitiatingProcessAccountDomain, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessId,
          InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, SHA1
| order by TimeGenerated desc
```

1. Spawning process originating from the download folder. Occurred in the first half of October, so sometime between October 1st -15th?

2. Similar executables, naming patterns, and other traits.
3. Common keywords, `"desk", "help", "support", and "tool"`



TimeGenerated [UTC] ↑↓	DeviceName	FileName	FolderPath	InitiatingProcessAccountDo...
10/9/2025, 3:42:50.767 AM	graham-mde	YourPhone.Contracts.Help.xml	C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\Microsoft.YourPhone_1.25072.79.0_x64__8wekyb3d8bbwe\YourPhone.Contracts.Help.xml	nt authority
10/9/2025, 3:42:50.833 AM	graham-mde	YourPhone.Help.xml	C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\Microsoft.YourPhone_1.25072.79.0_x64__8wekyb3d8bbwe\YourPhone.Help.xml	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:49:17.901 AM	windows-target-1	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 8:39:42.221 AM	sam-ftwr	tool_close.bmp	C:\Program Files (x86)\Yahoo!\Messenger\skins\Default\theme\tool_close.bmp	sam-ftwr
10/9/2025, 8:39:42.237 AM	sam-ftwr	tool_closebutton.bmp	C:\Program Files (x86)\Yahoo!\Messenger\skins\Default\theme\tool_closebutton.bmp	sam-ftwr
10/9/2025, 8:49:05.682 AM	wnx-portfolio	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 10:00:08.533 AM	salehsalehvm	help.png	C:\Users\labuser\AppData\Local\Microsoft\OneDrive\25.179.0914.0003\Bundle\Assets\common\assets\images\help.png	salehsalehvm
10/9/2025, 11:58:10.912 AM	gab-intern-vm	help.png	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\Local\Microsoft\OneDrive\25.179.0914.0003\Bundle\Assets\common\assets\images\help.png	gab-intern-vm
10/9/2025, 12:05:38.728 PM	gab-intern-vm	Support_701.txt	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Documents\HelpdeskLogs\Support_701.txt	gab-intern-vm
10/9/2025, 12:48:52.609 PM	salehsalehvm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
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10/9/2025, 2:06:05.966 PM	na-zero-1	help.png	C:\Users\NAlab\AppData\Local\Microsoft\OneDrive\25.174.0907.0003\Bundle\Assets\common\assets\images\help.png	na-zero-1
10/9/2025, 4:48:50.750 PM	salehsalehvm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:48:55.106 PM	windows-target-1	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:48:58.356 PM	amb15	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:49:00.718 PM	gab-intern-vm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:49:27.270 PM	musas-test	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
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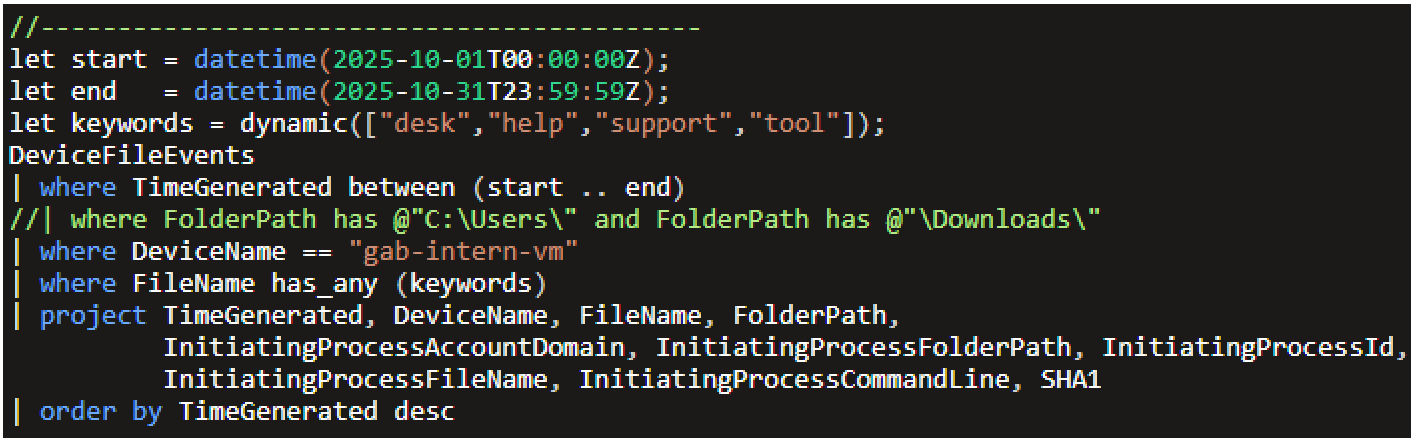
10/9/2025, 5:06:53.254 PM	sam-ftwr	tool_closebutton.bmp	C:\Program Files (x86)\Yahoo!\Messenger\skins\Default\theme\tool_closebutton.bmp	sam-ftwr



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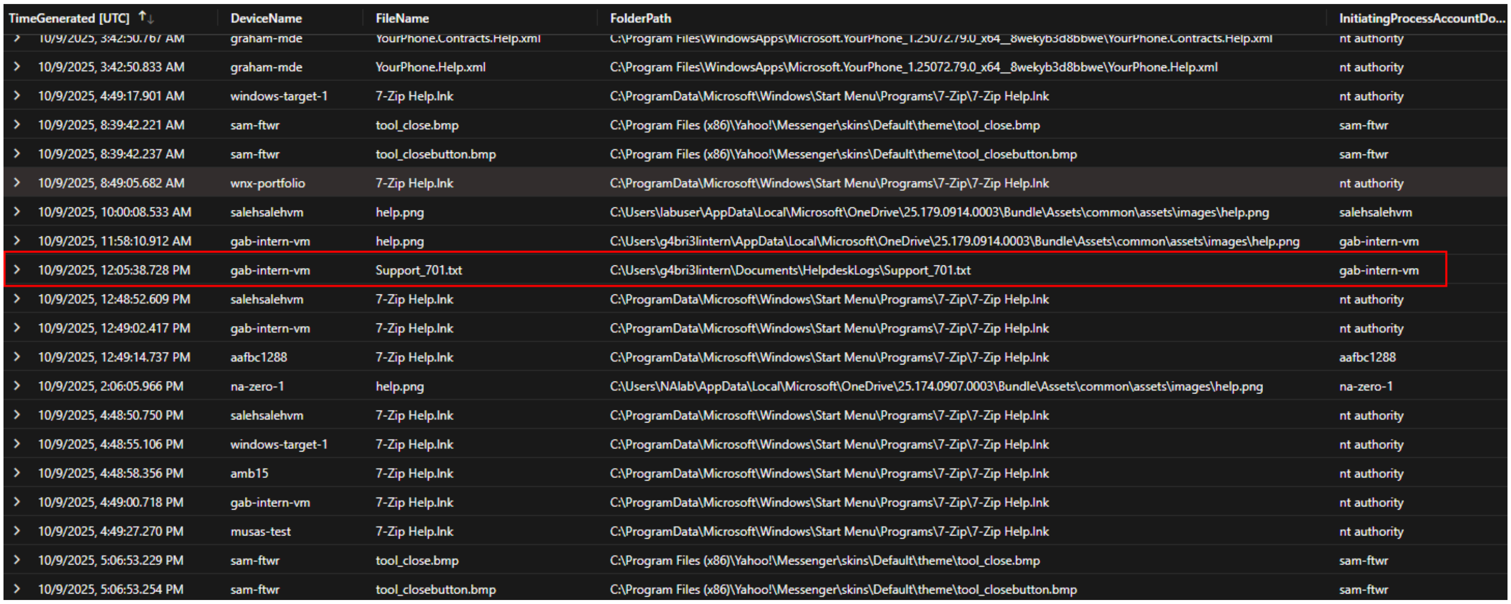
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where FileName has_any (keywords)
| project TimeGenerated, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath,
          InitiatingProcessAccountDomain, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessId,
          InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, SHA1
| order by TimeGenerated desc
```

Ideally, another way I could have found this device without having to think so hard was to have queried the term `Intern` for `DeviceName` in order to find the suspicious device,

`gab-intern-vm`

This too would have been an easier method to find in order to narrow down the suspicious device.



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10/9/2025, 3:42:50.833 AM	graham-mde	YourPhone.Help.xml	C:\Program Files\WindowsApps\Microsoft.YourPhone_1.25072.79.0_x64__8wekyb3d8bbwe\YourPhone.Help.xml	nt authority
10/9/2025, 4:49:17.901 AM	windows-target-1	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
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10/9/2025, 12:48:52.609 PM	salehsalehvm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 12:49:02.417 PM	gab-intern-vm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
10/9/2025, 12:49:14.737 PM	aafbc1288	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	aafbc1288
10/9/2025, 2:06:05.966 PM	na-zero-1	help.png	C:\Users\NAlab\AppData\Local\Microsoft\OneDrive\25.174.0907.0003\Bundle\Assets\common\assets\images\help.png	na-zero-1
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10/9/2025, 4:49:00.718 PM	gab-intern-vm	7-Zip Help.lnk	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs\7-Zip\7-Zip Help.lnk	nt authority
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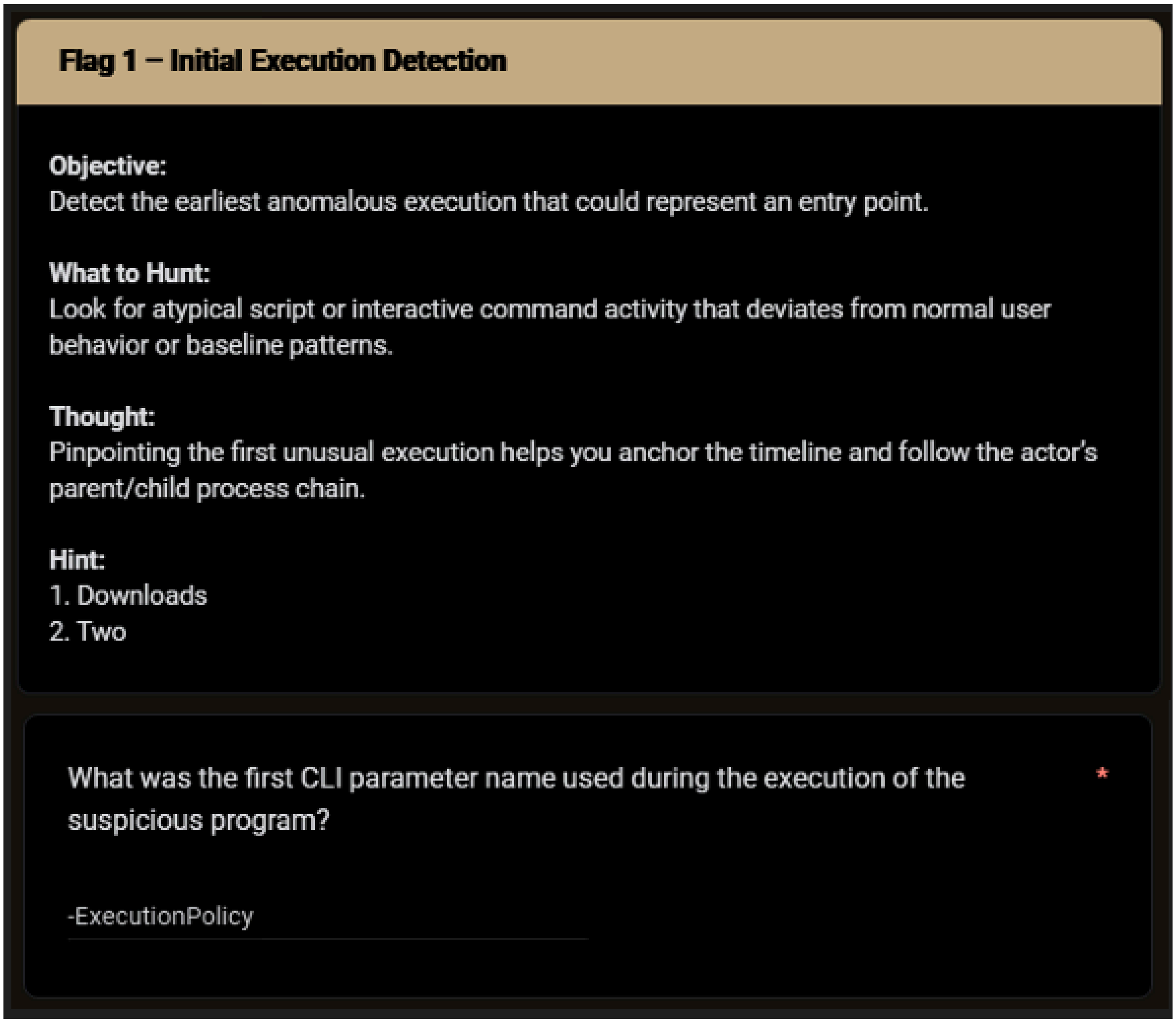
10/9/2025, 5:06:53.229 PM	sam-ftwr	tool_close.bmp	C:\Program Files (x86)\Yahoo!\Messenger\skins\Default\theme\tool_close.bmp	sam-ftwr
10/9/2025, 5:06:53.254 PM	sam-ftwr	tool_closebutton.bmp	C:\Program Files (x86)\Yahoo!\Messenger\skins\Default\theme\tool_closebutton.bmp	sam-ftwr

Detection and Analysis

Flag 1 - Initial Execution Detection



Flag 1 – Initial Execution Detection

Objective:
Detect the earliest anomalous execution that could represent an entry point.

What to Hunt:
Look for atypical script or interactive command activity that deviates from normal user behavior or baseline patterns.

Thought:
Pinpointing the first unusual execution helps you anchor the timeline and follow the actor's parent/child process chain.

Hint:
1. Downloads
2. Two

What was the first CLI parameter name used during the execution of the suspicious program? *

-ExecutionPolicy

Throughout the threat hunt, the table `'DeviceProcessEvents'` was very key in order to examine the logs.

For Flag 1, we're looking at Initial Execution Detection

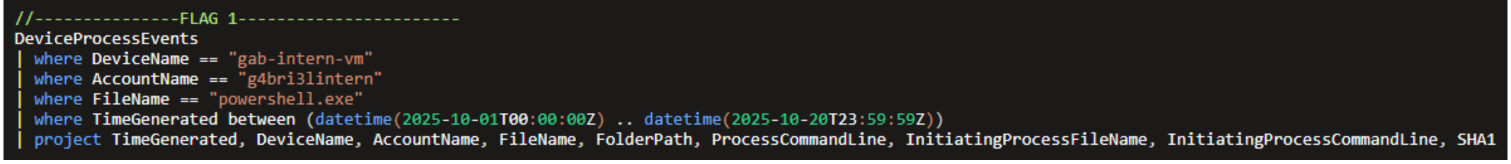
When I read what to hunt and saw 'script', the first thing that came to mind was PowerShell and Command Prompt.

Further on, the question asked

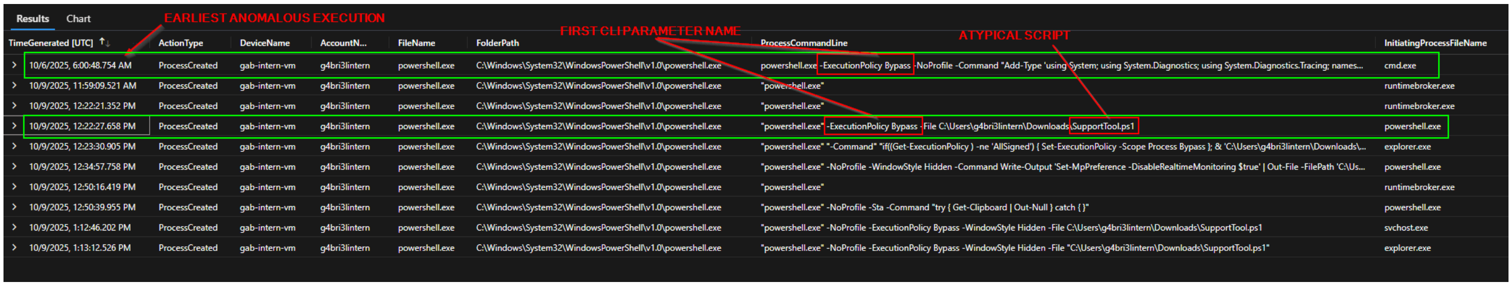
`"What was the first CLI (command line interface) parameter name used during the execution of the suspicious program?"`

After looking back and forth at was being asked of the flag and examining logs `"unusual execution"` was key in order to find this flag.

The earliest anomalous execution of powershell being executed was October 9th, 2025 @ 12:22 PM



```
//---------------FLAG 1----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where FileName == "powershell.exe"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-20T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, DeviceName, AccountName, FileName, FolderPath, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, SHA1
```

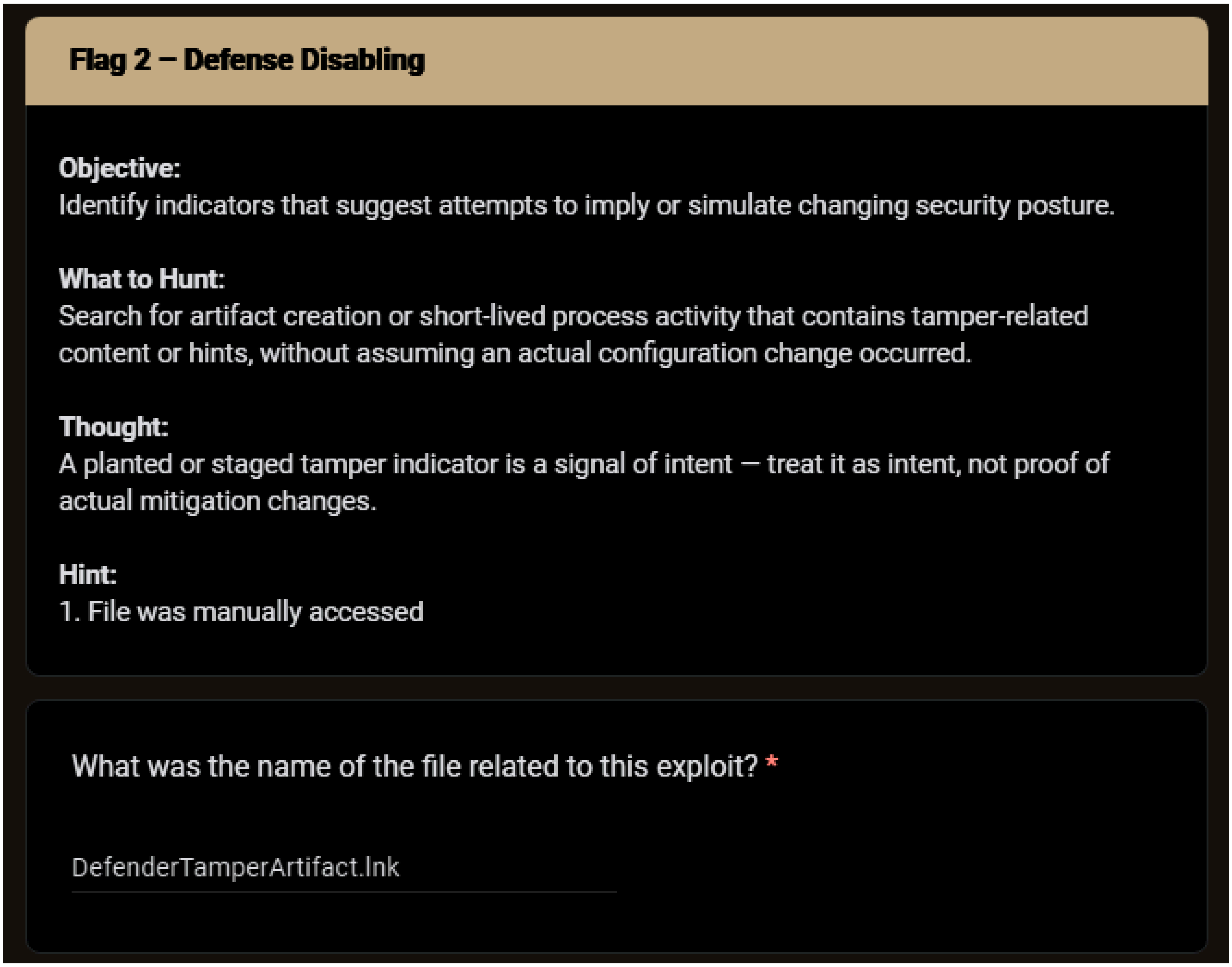


TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	AccountN...	FileName	FolderPath	ProcessCommandLine	InitiatingProcessFileName
10/6/2025, 6:00:48.754 AM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -NoProfile -Command "Add-Type 'using System; using System.Diagnostics; using System.Diagnostics.Tracing; names...	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 11:59:09.521 AM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:21.352 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:27.658 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -File C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:23:30.905 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" "-Command" "if((Get-ExecutionPolicy) -ne 'AllSigned') { Set-ExecutionPolicy -Scope Process Bypass }; & 'C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\...	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:57.758 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -WindowStyle Hidden -Command Write-Output 'Set-MpPreference -DisableRealtimeMonitoring $true' | Out-File -FilePath 'C:\Us...	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.419 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:50:39.955 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 1:12:46.202 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -WindowStyle Hidden -File C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1	svchost.exe
10/9/2025, 1:13:12.526 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	C:\Windows\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0\powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -WindowStyle Hidden -File "C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1"	explorer.exe

Upon looking at the log activity for powershell executables we can see the first CLI parameter is set to `–ExecutionPolicy`. First time it was executed was on October 6th, 2025 at 6:00:48 AM

This eventually occurred again for a powershell.exe process called `SupportTool.ps1` for October 9th, 2025 during 12:22:27 PM UTC

Flag 2 - Defense Disabling



Flag 2 – Defense Disabling

Objective:
Identify indicators that suggest attempts to imply or simulate changing security posture.

What to Hunt:
Search for artifact creation or short-lived process activity that contains tamper-related content or hints, without assuming an actual configuration change occurred.

Thought:
A planted or staged tamper indicator is a signal of intent — treat it as intent, not proof of actual mitigation changes.

Hint:
1. File was manually accessed

What was the name of the file related to this exploit? *

DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk

Further on, I decided to pivot back into `DeviceProcessEvents` table and look back into more power shell activity.

I kept noticing this command scrolling through the logs and noticed the string when querying for `Artifact` and `Out-File -FilePath 'C:\Users\Public\DefenderTamperArtifact.txt'`

The query used in Flag 1 to understand the CLI parameter `-ExecutionPolicy`, was key into understanding the timeline of events

that showed another powershell command outputting a file called

`DefenderTamperArtifact.txt`

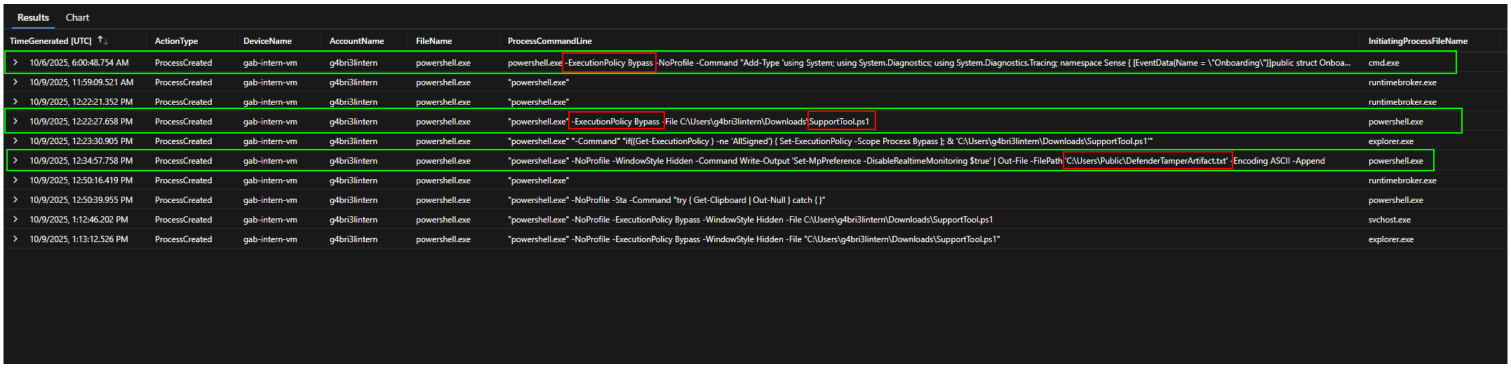
As I kept querying for the term artifact and I kept on encountering the file name

`ReconArtifacts.zip.`

It was the closest thing I can find but it was not the official tampered artifact.

Still needed to find something related to either this or the `DefenderTamperArtifact.txt` file.

Somehow I knew these were related to Defense Disabling but could not make the linkage as to how it was all connected.



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	AccountName	FileName	ProcessCommandLine	InitiatingProcessFileName
10/6/2025, 6:00:48.754 AM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -NoProfile -Command "Add-Type 'using System; using System.Diagnostics; using System.Diagnostics.Tracing; namespace Sense { [EventData(Name = \"Onboarding\")]public struct Onboa...	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 11:59:09.521 AM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:21.352 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
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10/9/2025, 12:23:30.905 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" "-Command" "if((Get-ExecutionPolicy) -ne 'AllSigned') { Set-ExecutionPolicy -Scope Process Bypass }; & 'C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1'"	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:57.758 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -WindowStyle Hidden -Command Write-Output 'Set-MpPreference -DisableRealtimeMonitoring $true' | Out-File -FilePath 'C:\Users\Public\DefenderTamperArtifact.txt' -Encoding ASCII -Append	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.419 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe
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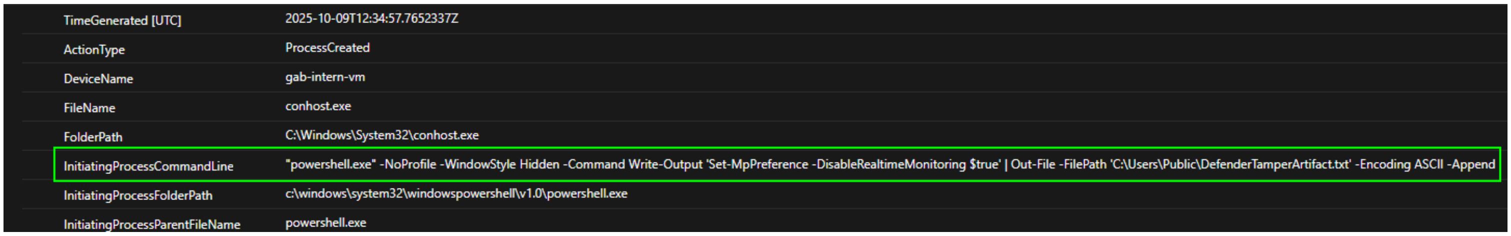
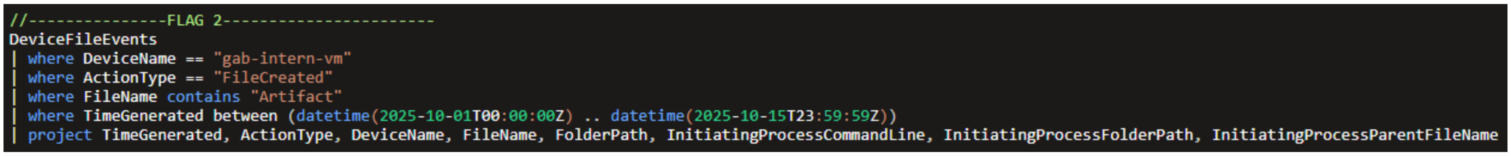
10/9/2025, 1:12:46.202 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -WindowStyle Hidden -File C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1	svchost.exe
10/9/2025, 1:13:12.526 PM	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -WindowStyle Hidden -File "C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1"	explorer.exe

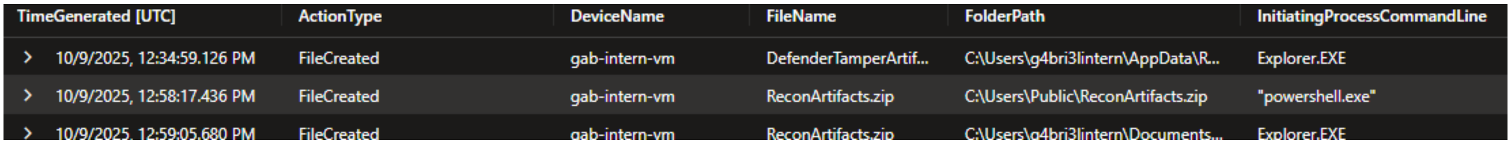


TimeGenerated [UTC]	2025-10-09T12:34:57.7652337Z
ActionType	ProcessCreated
DeviceName	gab-intern-vm
FileName	conhost.exe
FolderPath	C:\Windows\System32\conhost.exe
InitiatingProcessCommandLine	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -WindowStyle Hidden -Command Write-Output 'Set-MpPreference -DisableRealtimeMonitoring $true' | Out-File -FilePath 'C:\Users\Public\DefenderTamperArtifact.txt' -Encoding ASCII -Append
InitiatingProcessFolderPath	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe
InitiatingProcessParentFileName	powershell.exe

I decided to check `DeviceFileEvents` table and query for `Artifact` in the `FileName` column.



```
//--------------FLAG 2----------------------
DeviceFileEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where ActionType == "FileCreated"
| where FileName contains "Artifact"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessParentFileName
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	FolderPath	InitiatingProcessCommandLine
10/9/2025, 12:34:59.126 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	DefenderTamperArtif...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\R...	Explorer.EXE
10/9/2025, 12:58:17.436 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip	"powershell.exe"
10/9/2025, 12:59:05.680 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Documents...	Explorer.EXE

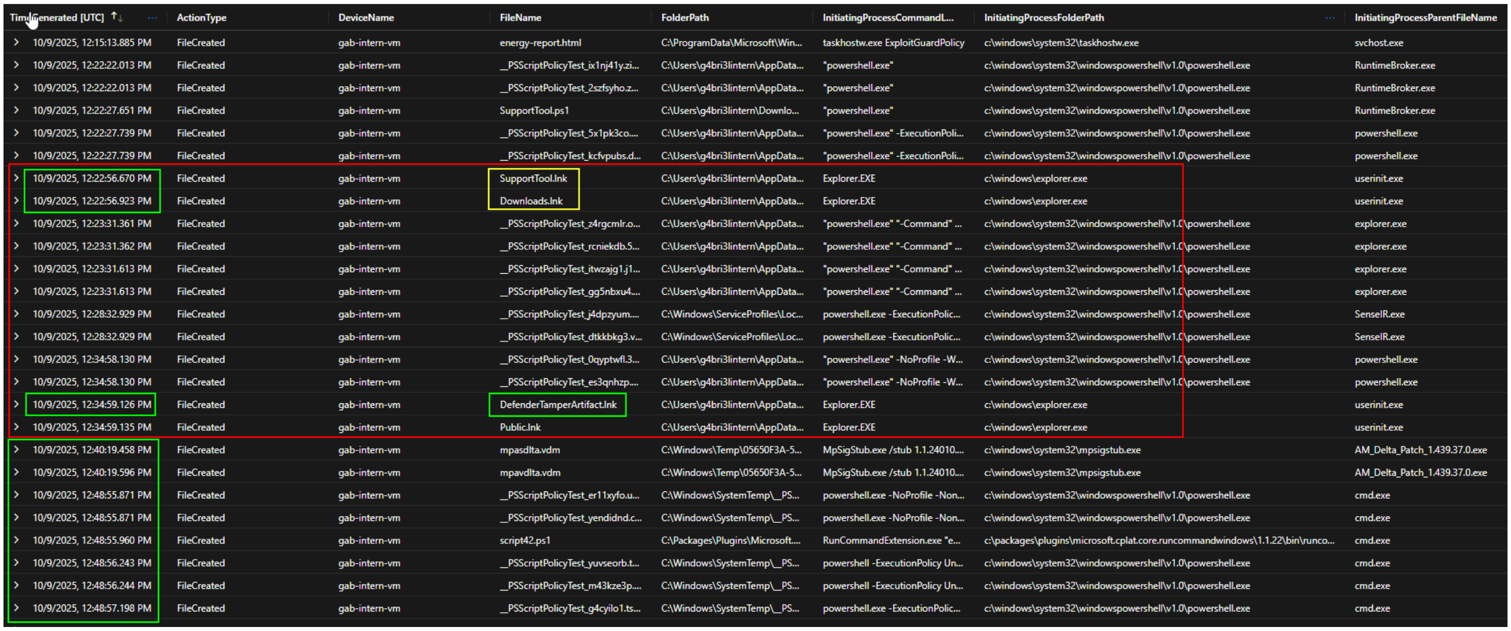
For the query, I kept using `Artifact` and used this information to see if there was another file name related to the term.

I found `ReconArtifacts.zip` and then saw that there was a

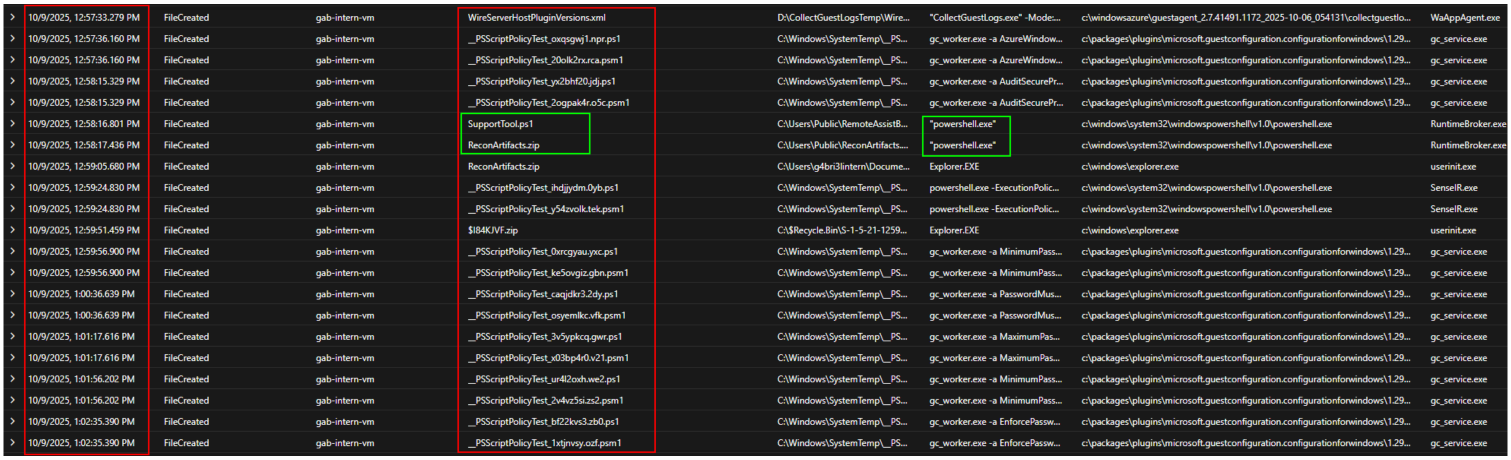
`DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk` file.

The timestamp matches with process creation from the `DeviceProcessEvents` table

The `.lnk` file extension is a shortcut of the filename. Upon researching `.LNK` files, they are often the trigger for malicious scripts and can be used for malicious purposes.

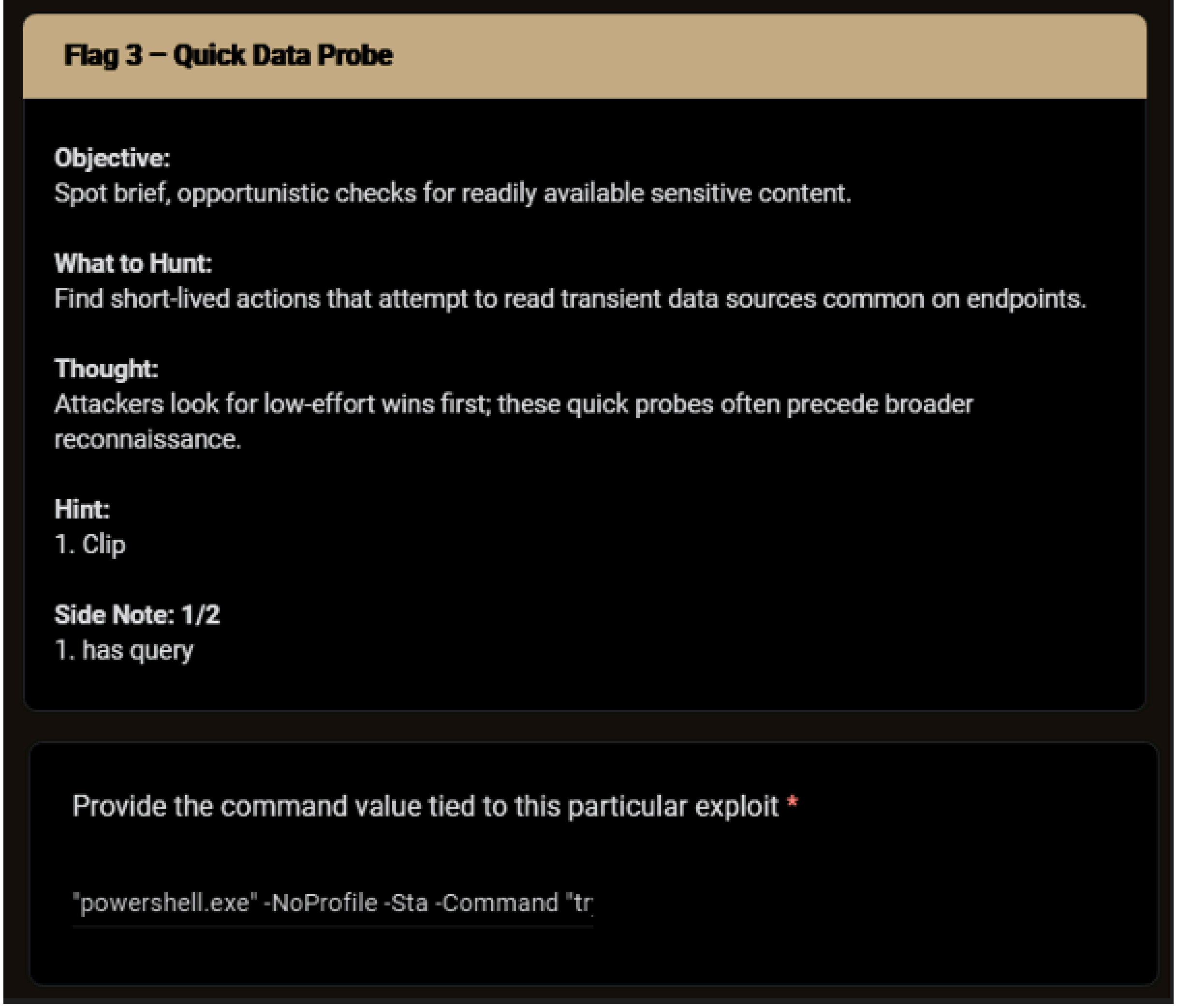


TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	FolderPath	InitiatingProcessCommandL...	InitiatingProcessFolderPath	InitiatingProcessParentFileName
10/9/2025, 12:15:13.885 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	energy-report.html	C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Win...	taskhostw.exe ExploitGuardPolicy	c:\windows\system32\taskhostw.exe	svchost.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:22.013 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_ix1nj41y.zi...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe"	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	RuntimeBroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:22.013 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_2szfsyho.z...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe"	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	RuntimeBroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:27.651 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.ps1	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downlo...	"powershell.exe"	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	RuntimeBroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:27.739 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_5x1pk3co....	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" -ExecutionPoli...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:27.739 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_kcfvpubs.d...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" -ExecutionPoli...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:56.670 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.lnk	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:22:56.923 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	Downloads.lnk	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:23:31.361 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_z4rgcmlr.o...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" "-Command" ...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:23:31.362 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_rcniekdb.5...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" "-Command" ...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:23:31.613 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_itwzajg1.j1...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" "-Command" ...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:23:31.613 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_gg5nbxu4....	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" "-Command" ...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	explorer.exe
10/9/2025, 12:28:32.929 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_j4dpzyum....	C:\Windows\ServiceProfiles\Loc...	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolic...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	SenseIR.exe
10/9/2025, 12:28:32.929 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_dtkkbkg3.v...	C:\Windows\ServiceProfiles\Loc...	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolic...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	SenseIR.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:58.130 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_0qyptwfl.3...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -W...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:58.130 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_es3qnhzp....	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -W...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	powershell.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:59.126 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:34:59.135 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	Public.lnk	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:40:19.458 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	mpasdlta.vdm	C:\Windows\Temp\05650F3A-5...	MpSigStub.exe /stub 1.1.24010....	c:\windows\system32\mpsigstub.exe	AM_Delta_Patch_1.439.37.0.exe
10/9/2025, 12:40:19.596 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	mpavdlta.vdm	C:\Windows\Temp\05650F3A-5...	MpSigStub.exe /stub 1.1.24010....	c:\windows\system32\mpsigstub.exe	AM_Delta_Patch_1.439.37.0.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:55.871 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_er11xyfo.u...	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell.exe -NoProfile -Non...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:55.871 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_yendidnd.c...	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell.exe -NoProfile -Non...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:55.960 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	script42.ps1	C:\Packages\Plugins\Microsoft....	RunCommandExtension.exe "e...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.cplat.core.runcommandwindows\1.1.22\bin\runco...	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:56.243 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_yuvseorb.t...	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell -ExecutionPolicy Un...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:56.244 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_m43kze3p....	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell -ExecutionPolicy Un...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	cmd.exe
10/9/2025, 12:48:57.198 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_g4cyilo1.ts...	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolic...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	cmd.exe



10/9/2025, 12:57:33.279 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	WireServerHostPluginVersions.xml	D:\CollectGuestLogsTemp\Wire...	"CollectGuestLogs.exe" -Mode:...	c:\windowsazure\guestagent_2.7.41491.1172_2025-10-06_054131\collectguestlo...	WaAppAgent.exe
10/9/2025, 12:57:36.160 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_oxqsgwj1.npr.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a AzureWindow...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 12:57:36.160 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_20olk2rx.rca.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a AzureWindow...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 12:58:15.329 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_yx2bhf20.jdj.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a AuditSecurePr...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 12:58:15.329 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_2ogpak4r.o5c.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a AuditSecurePr...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 12:58:16.801 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.ps1	C:\Users\Public\RemoteAssistB...	"powershell.exe"	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	RuntimeBroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:58:17.436 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts....	"powershell.exe"	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	RuntimeBroker.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:05.680 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Docume...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:24.830 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_ihdjjydm.0yb.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolic...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	SenseIR.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:24.830 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_y54zvolk.tek.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	powershell.exe -ExecutionPolic...	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe	SenseIR.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:51.459 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	$I84KJVF.zip	C:\$Recycle.Bin\S-1-5-21-1259...	Explorer.EXE	c:\windows\explorer.exe	userinit.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:56.900 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_0xrcgyau.yxc.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MinimumPass...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 12:59:56.900 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_ke5ovgiz.gbn.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MinimumPass...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:00:36.639 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_caqjdkr3.2dy.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a PasswordMus...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:00:36.639 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_osyemlkc.vfk.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a PasswordMus...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:01:17.616 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_3v5ypkcq.gwr.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MaximumPas...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:01:17.616 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_x03bp4r0.v21.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MaximumPas...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:01:56.202 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_ur4l2oxh.we2.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MinimumPass...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:01:56.202 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_2v4vz5si.zs2.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a MinimumPass...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:02:35.390 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_bf22kvs3.zb0.ps1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a EnforcePassw...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe
10/9/2025, 1:02:35.390 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_1xtjnvsy.ozf.psm1	C:\Windows\SystemTemp\__PS...	gc_worker.exe -a EnforcePassw...	c:\packages\plugins\microsoft.guestconfiguration.configurationforwindows\1.29...	gc_service.exe

Flag 3 - Quick Data Probe



Flag 3 – Quick Data Probe

Objective:
Spot brief, opportunistic checks for readily available sensitive content.

What to Hunt:
Find short-lived actions that attempt to read transient data sources common on endpoints.

Thought:
Attackers look for low-effort wins first; these quick probes often precede broader reconnaissance.

Hint:
1. Clip

Side Note: 1/2
1. has query

Provide the command value tied to this particular exploit *

"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "tr

For this flag I imagined the command value had something to do with copy and paste actions as it is a common short-lived action.

The other part to this was the term `query`

I decided to check the `InitiateProcessCommandLine` column and find syntax and flags that looked like it was written as a query.

Upon looking I kept my focus on the timeline of the script and tried to match up the time .

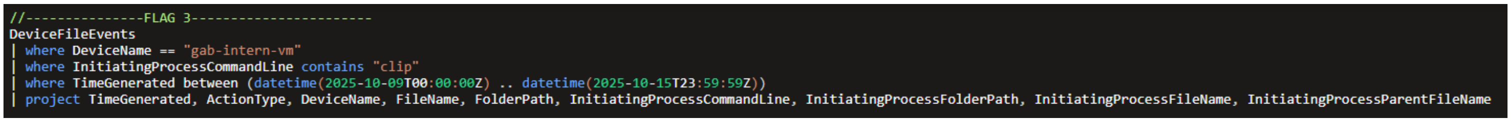
The `InitiatingProcessCommandLine` showed this command below when querying for `'clip'`

The Answer:

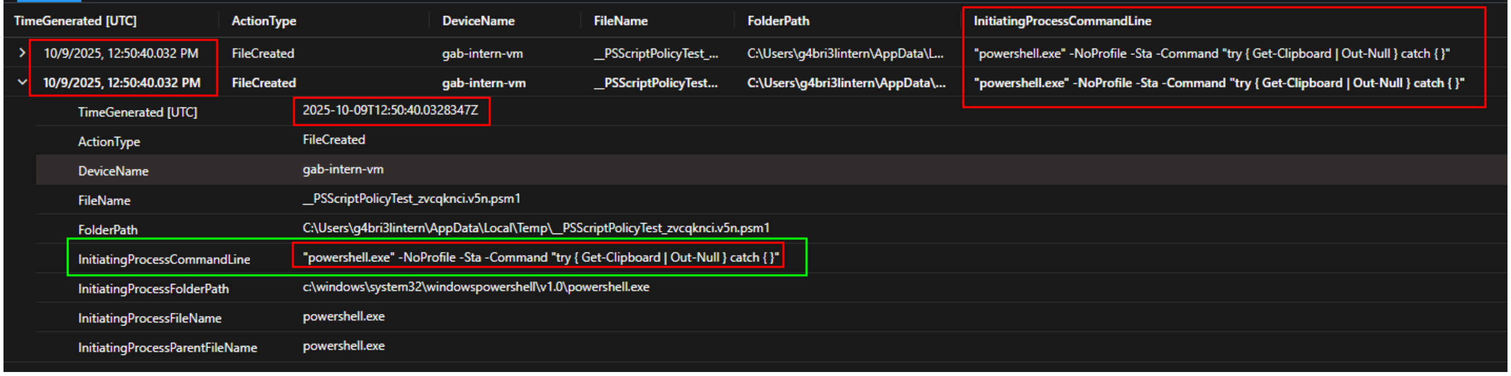
```
"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"
```

This specific activity related to `powershell` has the syntax for a query such as

```
"try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"
```



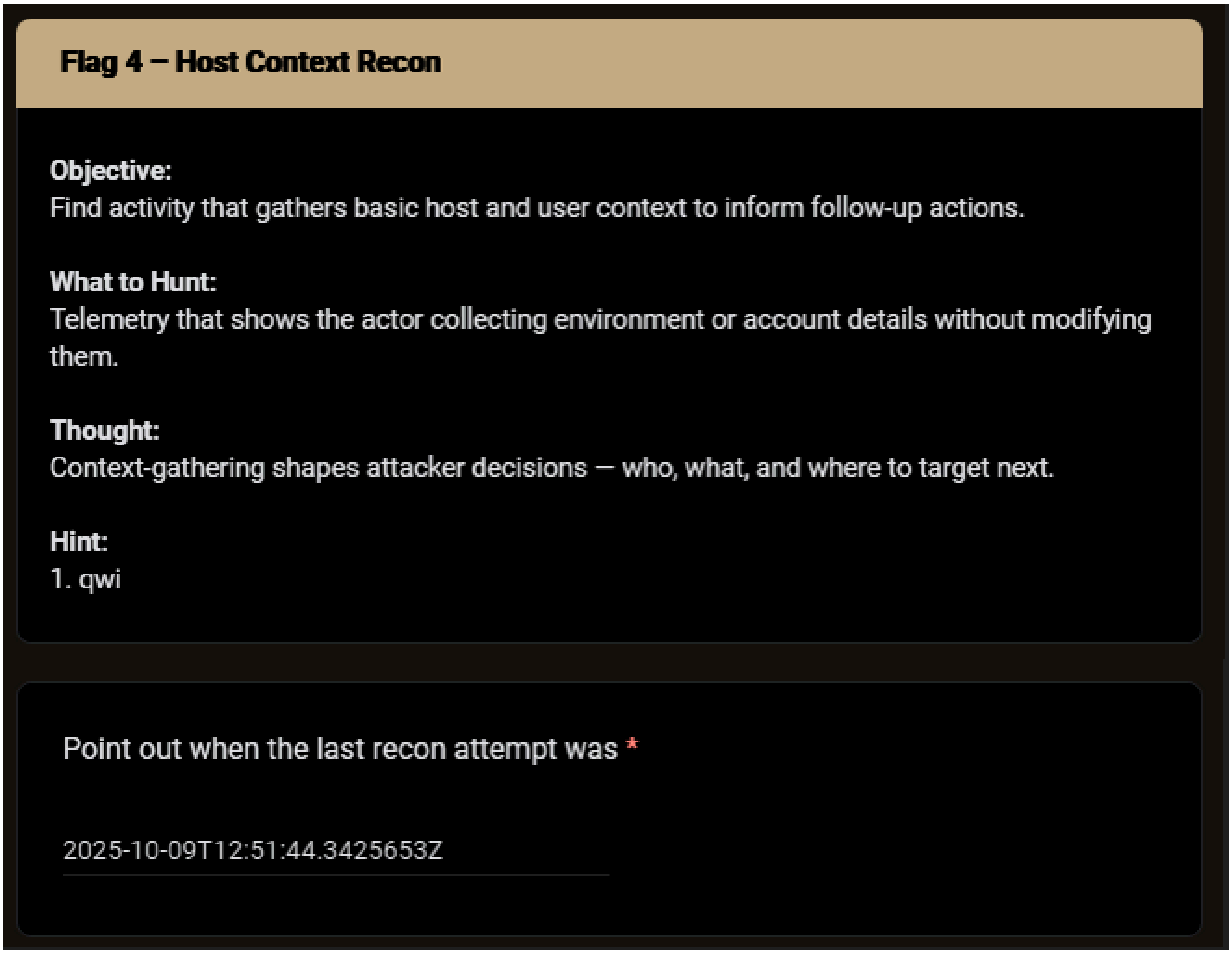
```
//---------------FLAG 3-----------------------
DeviceFileEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where InitiatingProcessCommandLine contains "clip"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-09T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessParentFileName
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	FolderPath	InitiatingProcessCommandLine
10/9/2025, 12:50:40.032 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest_...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\L...	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"
10/9/2025, 12:50:40.032 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	__PSScriptPolicyTest...	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\...	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"

TimeGenerated [UTC]	2025-10-09T12:50:40.0328347Z
ActionType	FileCreated
DeviceName	gab-intern-vm
FileName	__PSScriptPolicyTest_zvcqknci.v5n.psm1
FolderPath	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\Local\Temp\__PSScriptPolicyTest_zvcqknci.v5n.psm1
InitiatingProcessCommandLine	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"
InitiatingProcessFolderPath	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1.0\powershell.exe
InitiatingProcessFileName	powershell.exe
InitiatingProcessParentFileName	powershell.exe

Flag 4 - Host Context Recon



Flag 4 – Host Context Recon

Objective:
Find activity that gathers basic host and user context to inform follow-up actions.

What to Hunt:
Telemetry that shows the actor collecting environment or account details without modifying them.

Thought:
Context-gathering shapes attacker decisions — who, what, and where to target next.

Hint:
1. qwi

Point out when the last recon attempt was *

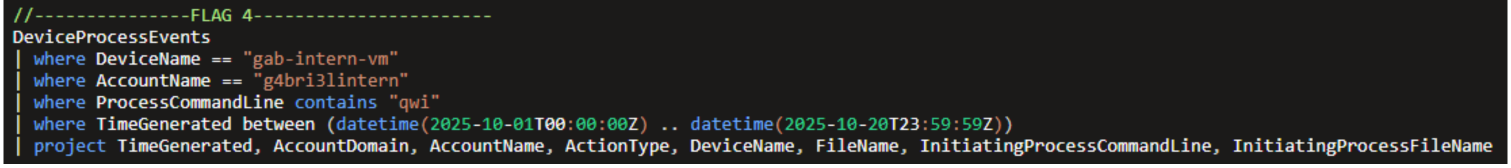
2025-10-09T12:51:44.3425653Z

While going through the logs, and reading this flag I recall seeing an executable called ' qwinsta.exe ' I had to look up this program and it is a command on windows that can:

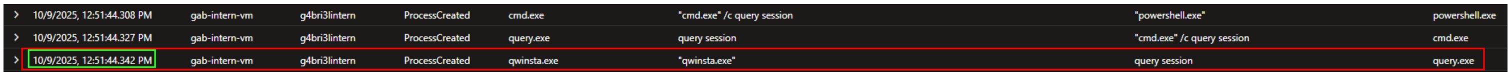
```
'Display information about sessions on a Remote Desktop Session Host server'
```

This made sense in terms of gathering host and user context information.

Working within the timestamp of `2025-10-09T12:51:44.3425653Z` we can see that this was the last recon attempt for the query session for the attacker to enumerate.

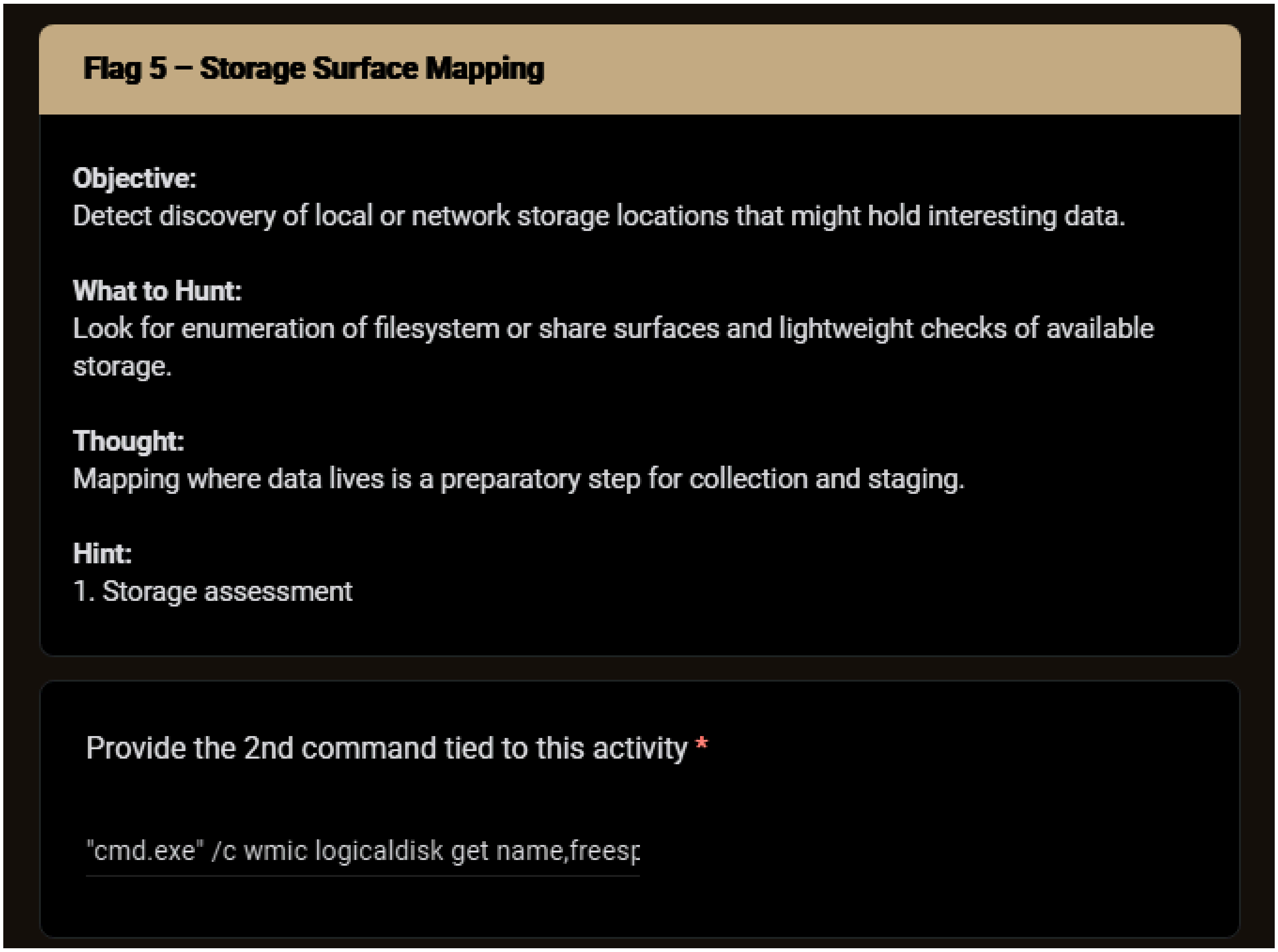


```
//---------------FLAG 4----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where ProcessCommandLine contains "qwi"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-20T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountDomain, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName
```



>	10/9/2025, 12:51:44.308 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c query session	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe
>	10/9/2025, 12:51:44.327 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	query.exe	query session	"cmd.exe" /c query session	cmd.exe
>	10/9/2025, 12:51:44.342 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	qwinsta.exe	"qwinsta.exe"	query session	query.exe

Flag 5 - Storage Surface Mapping



Flag 5 – Storage Surface Mapping

Objective:
Detect discovery of local or network storage locations that might hold interesting data.

What to Hunt:
Look for enumeration of filesystem or share surfaces and lightweight checks of available storage.

Thought:
Mapping where data lives is a preparatory step for collection and staging.

Hint:
1. Storage assessment

Provide the 2nd command tied to this activity *

"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk get name,freesp

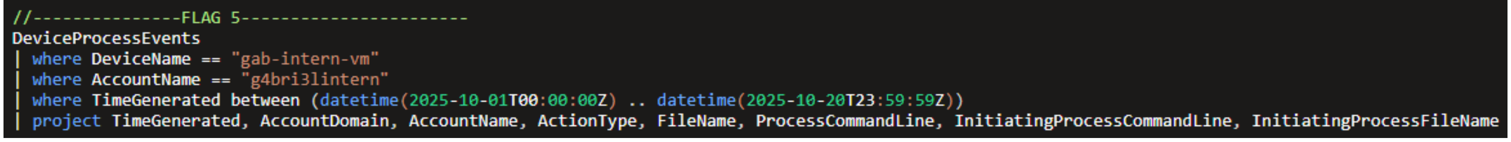
After looking at the 'qwinsta.exe' process that was created in the logs.

I noticed the command prompt executable that showed logical disk that comes after the 'qwinsta.exe' executable.

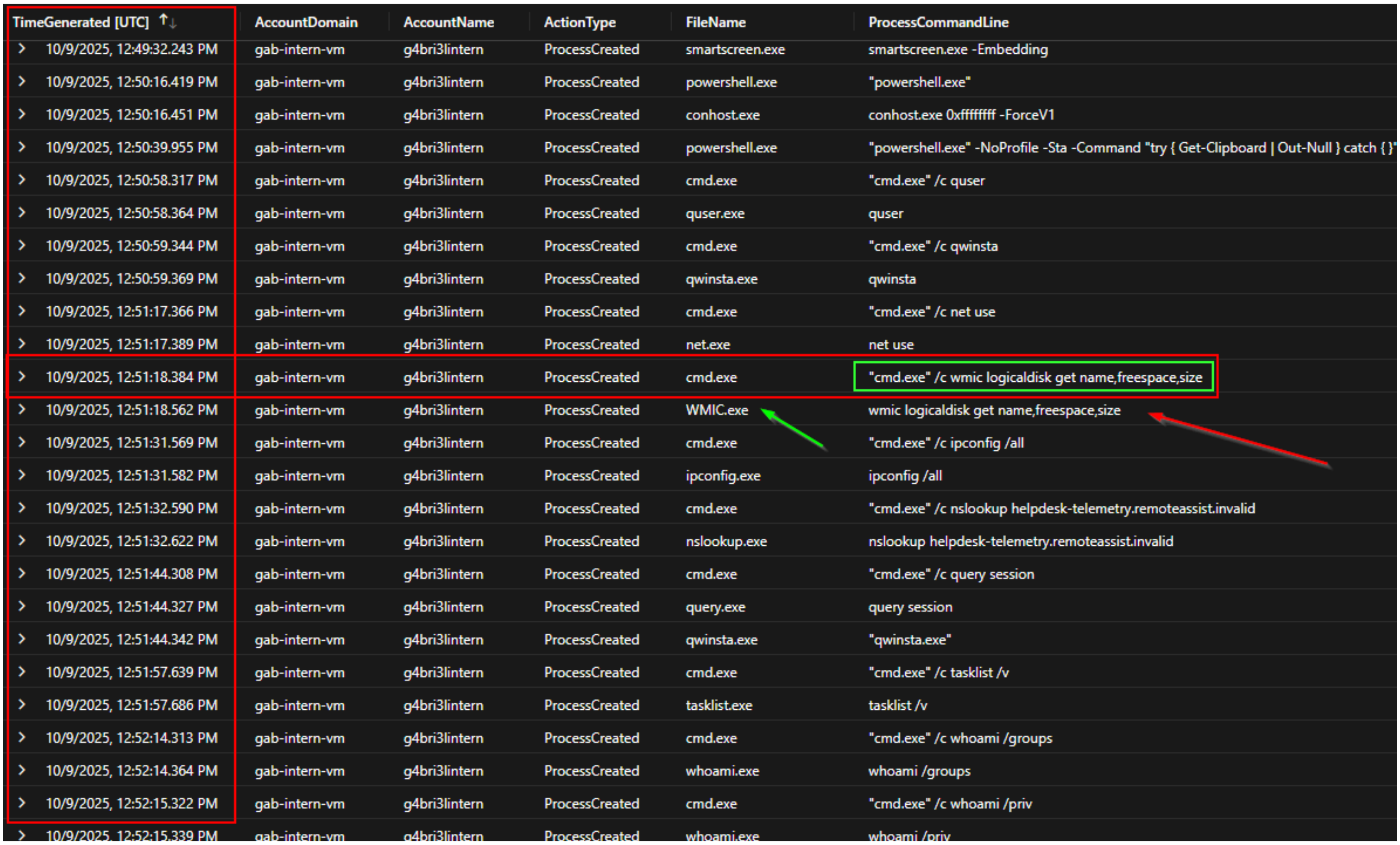
This made sense in terms of data as to where it lives and the data that can be discovered such as 'storage'. Decided to search for 'WMIC.exe' command and found out that the 'logical disk'

We can see the `TimeGenerated` column is still within 12:50:00 PM-12:51:00 PM.

```
Time Generated @ 2025-10-09T12:51:18.3848072Z
"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk get name,freespace,size
```

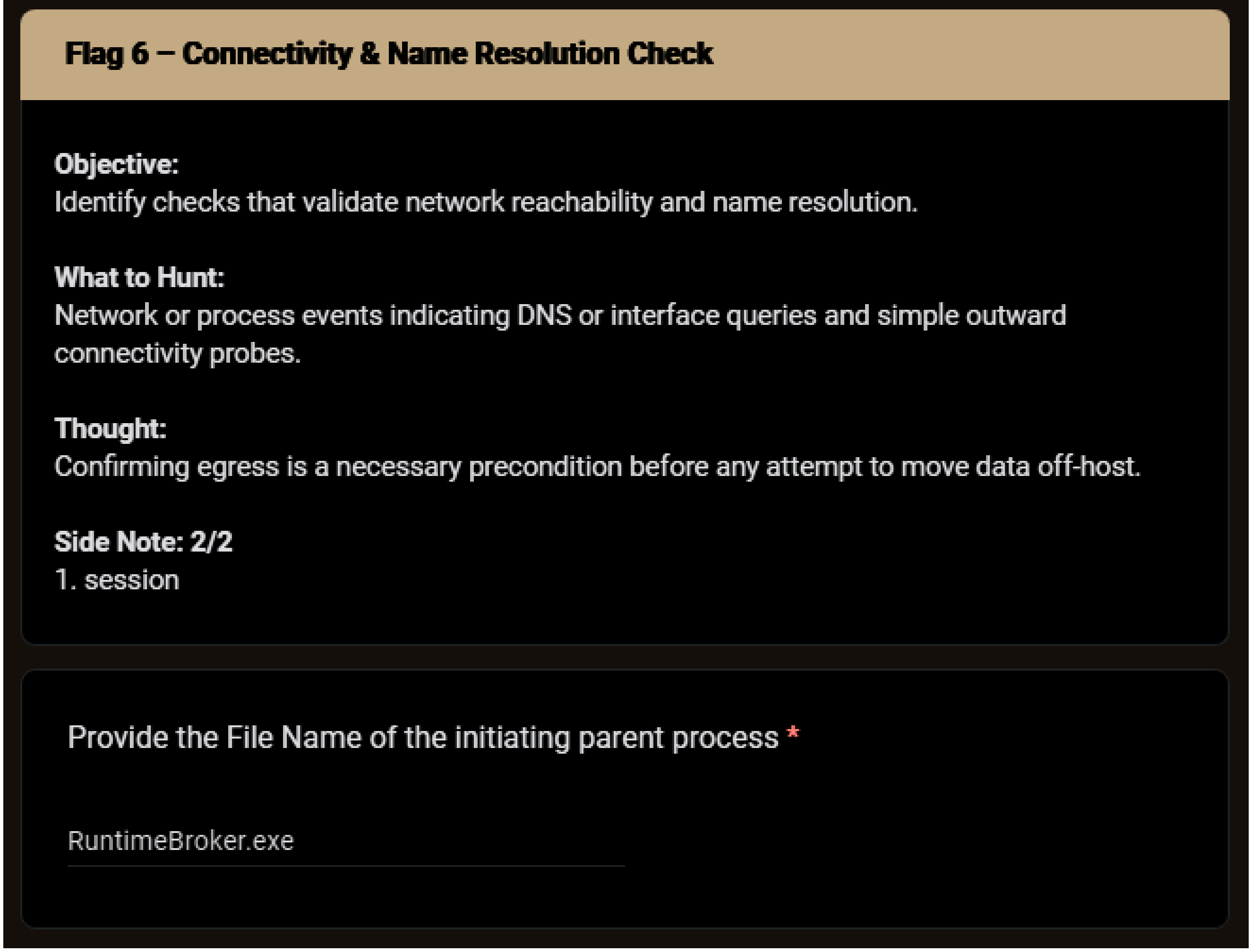


```
//---------------FLAG 5-----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-20T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountDomain, AccountName, ActionType, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName
```



TimeGenerated [UTC] ↑↓	AccountDomain	AccountName	ActionType	FileName	ProcessCommandLine
10/9/2025, 12:49:32.243 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	smartscreen.exe	smartscreen.exe -Embedding
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.419 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.451 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	conhost.exe	conhost.exe 0xffffffff -ForceV1
10/9/2025, 12:50:39.955 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"
10/9/2025, 12:50:58.317 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c quser
10/9/2025, 12:50:58.364 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	quser.exe	quser
10/9/2025, 12:50:59.344 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c qwinsta
10/9/2025, 12:50:59.369 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	qwinsta.exe	qwinsta
10/9/2025, 12:51:17.366 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c net use
10/9/2025, 12:51:17.389 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	net.exe	net use
10/9/2025, 12:51:18.384 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk get name,freespace,size
10/9/2025, 12:51:18.562 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	WMIC.exe	wmic logicaldisk get name,freespace,size
10/9/2025, 12:51:31.569 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c ipconfig /all
10/9/2025, 12:51:31.582 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	ipconfig.exe	ipconfig /all
10/9/2025, 12:51:32.590 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c nslookup helpdesk-telemetry.remoteassist.invalid
10/9/2025, 12:51:32.622 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	nslookup.exe	nslookup helpdesk-telemetry.remoteassist.invalid
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.308 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c query session
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.327 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	query.exe	query session
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.342 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	qwinsta.exe	"qwinsta.exe"
10/9/2025, 12:51:57.639 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c tasklist /v
10/9/2025, 12:51:57.686 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	tasklist.exe	tasklist /v
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.313 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.364 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	whoami.exe	whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.322 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.339 PM	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	whoami.exe	whoami /priv

Flag 6 - Connectivity & Name Resolution Check



Flag 6 – Connectivity & Name Resolution Check

Objective:
Identify checks that validate network reachability and name resolution.

What to Hunt:
Network or process events indicating DNS or interface queries and simple outward connectivity probes.

Thought:
Confirming egress is a necessary precondition before any attempt to move data off-host.

Side Note: 2/2
1. session

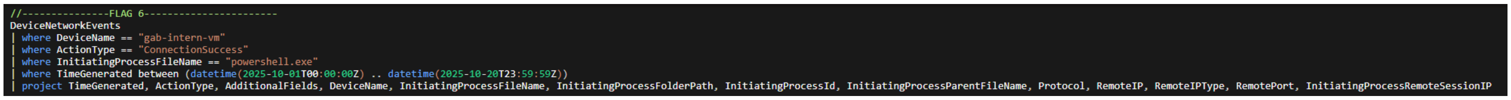
Provide the File Name of the initiating parent process *

RuntimeBroker.exe

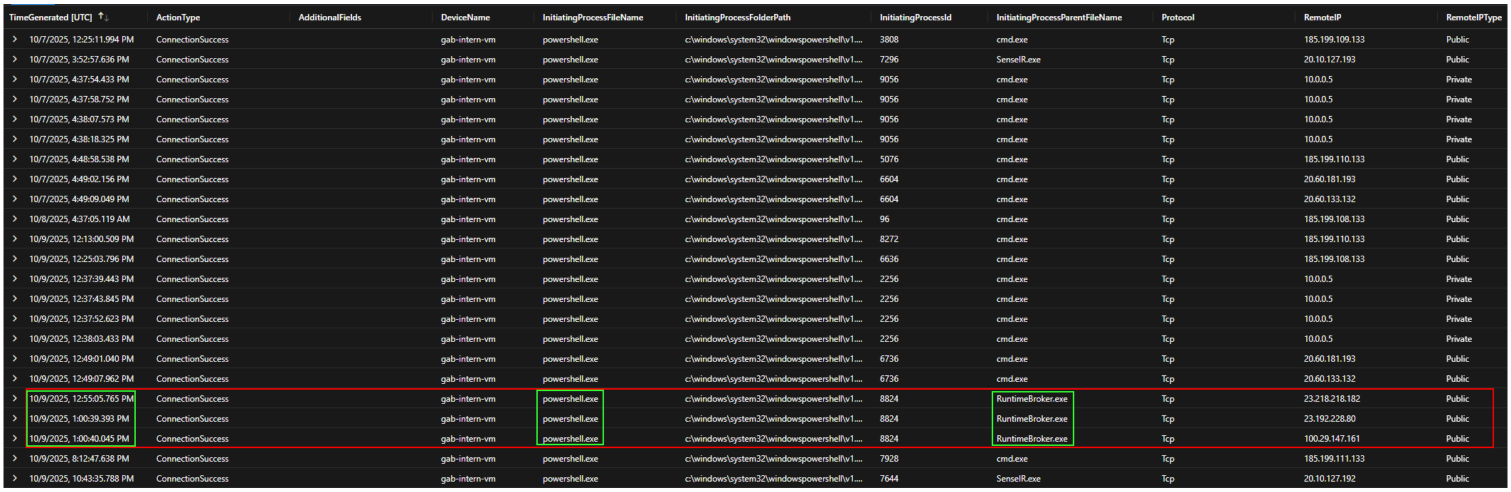
What was key to this question was network related events.
Especially when it comes to DNS and outbound connections.

I decided to check the `InitiatingProcessParentFileName` column in the `DeviceNetworkEvents` table and try to narrow down unusual PowerShell activity.

I made sure to stay focused on October 9th 2025 during the time of `12:50-12:55 PM` as other events from `DeviceProcessEvents` and `DeviceFileEvents` were very important in relation to `SupportToolScript.ps1`. `Powershell` executables have been very prevalent throughout the hunt.

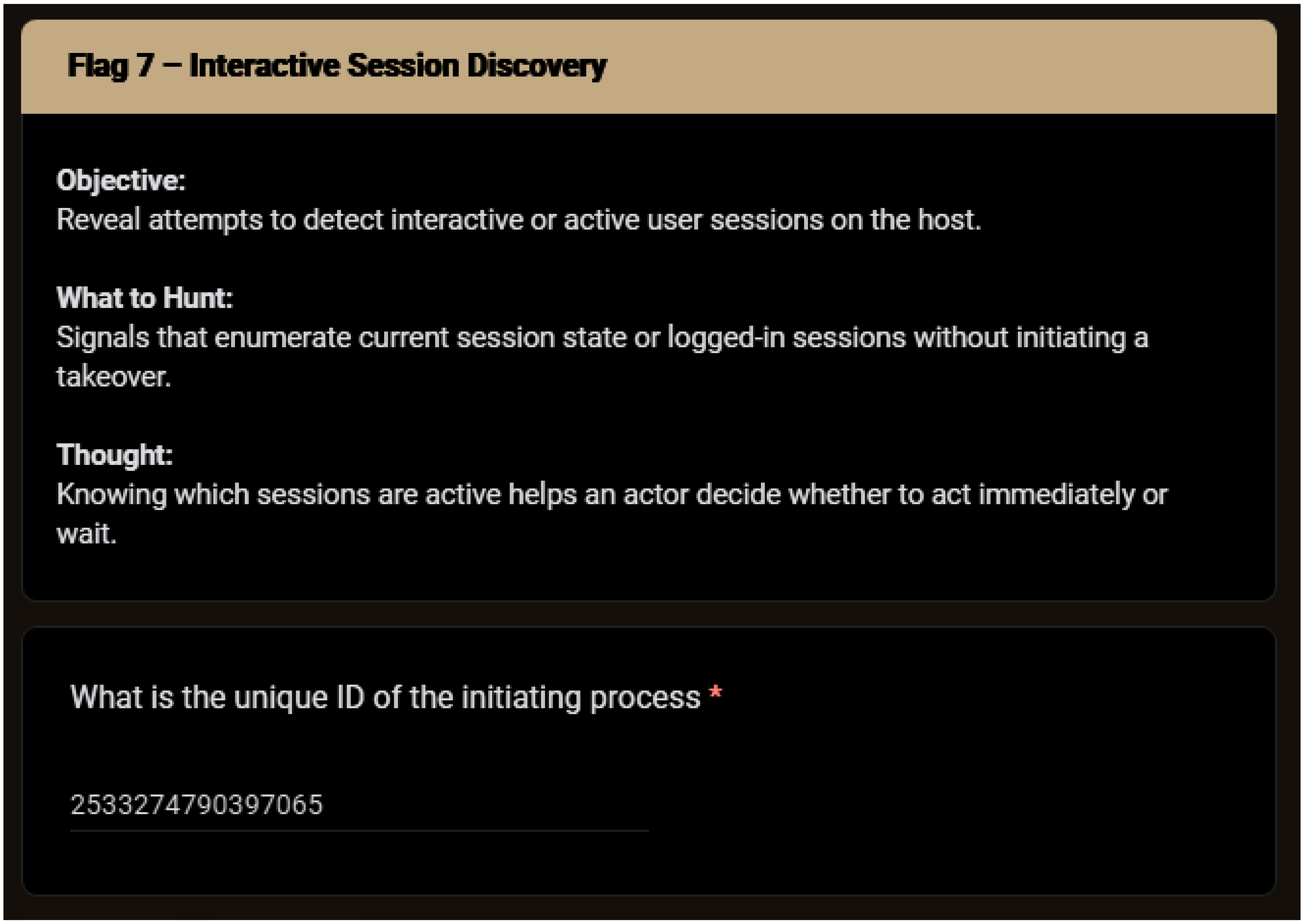


```
//---------------FLAG 6-----------------------
DeviceNetworkEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where ActionType == "ConnectionSuccess"
| where InitiatingProcessFileName == "powershell.exe"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-20T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, AdditionalFields, DeviceName, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentFileName, Protocol, RemoteIP, RemoteIPType, RemotePort, InitiatingProcessRemoteSessionIP
```



TimeGenerated [UTC] ↑↓	ActionType	AdditionalFields	DeviceName	InitiatingProcessFileName	InitiatingProcessFolderPath	InitiatingProcessId	InitiatingProcessParentFileName	Protocol	RemoteIP	RemoteIPType
10/7/2025, 12:25:11.994 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	3808	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.109.133	Public
10/7/2025, 3:52:57.636 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	7296	SenseIR.exe	Tcp	20.10.127.193	Public
10/7/2025, 4:37:54.433 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	9056	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/7/2025, 4:37:58.752 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	9056	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/7/2025, 4:38:07.573 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	9056	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/7/2025, 4:38:18.325 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	9056	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/7/2025, 4:48:58.538 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	5076	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.110.133	Public
10/7/2025, 4:49:02.156 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	6604	cmd.exe	Tcp	20.60.181.193	Public
10/7/2025, 4:49:09.049 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	6604	cmd.exe	Tcp	20.60.133.132	Public
10/8/2025, 4:37:05.119 AM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	96	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.108.133	Public
10/9/2025, 12:13:00.509 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	8272	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.110.133	Public
10/9/2025, 12:25:03.796 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	6636	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.108.133	Public
10/9/2025, 12:37:39.443 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	2256	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/9/2025, 12:37:43.845 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	2256	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/9/2025, 12:37:52.623 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	2256	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/9/2025, 12:38:03.433 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	2256	cmd.exe	Tcp	10.0.0.5	Private
10/9/2025, 12:49:01.040 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	6736	cmd.exe	Tcp	20.60.181.193	Public
10/9/2025, 12:49:07.962 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	6736	cmd.exe	Tcp	20.60.133.132	Public
10/9/2025, 12:55:05.765 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	8824	RuntimeBroker.exe	Tcp	23.218.218.182	Public
10/9/2025, 1:00:39.393 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	8824	RuntimeBroker.exe	Tcp	23.192.228.80	Public
10/9/2025, 1:00:40.045 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	8824	RuntimeBroker.exe	Tcp	100.29.147.161	Public
10/9/2025, 8:12:47.638 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	7928	cmd.exe	Tcp	185.199.111.133	Public
10/9/2025, 10:43:35.788 PM	ConnectionSuccess		gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	c:\windows\system32\windowspowershell\v1....	7644	SenseIR.exe	Tcp	20.10.127.192	Public

Flag 7 - Interactive Session Discovery



Flag 7 – Interactive Session Discovery

Objective:
Reveal attempts to detect interactive or active user sessions on the host.

What to Hunt:
Signals that enumerate current session state or logged-in sessions without initiating a takeover.

Thought:
Knowing which sessions are active helps an actor decide whether to act immediately or wait.

What is the unique ID of the initiating process *

2533274790397065

`Keywords: Session, Initiate Process, Unique`

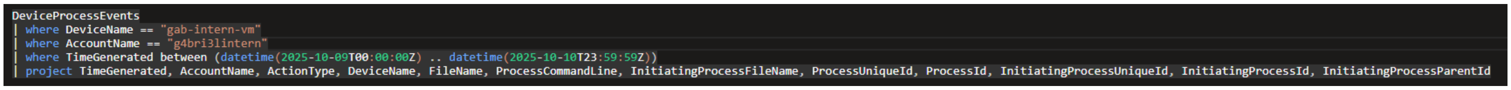
Had to get a little help with this one from another user without having to give away the answer and eventually I had a lightbulb moment.

It was actually really simple. When I read the question "What is the unique ID of the initiating process?" I kept focusing for the column `InitiatingProcessID`

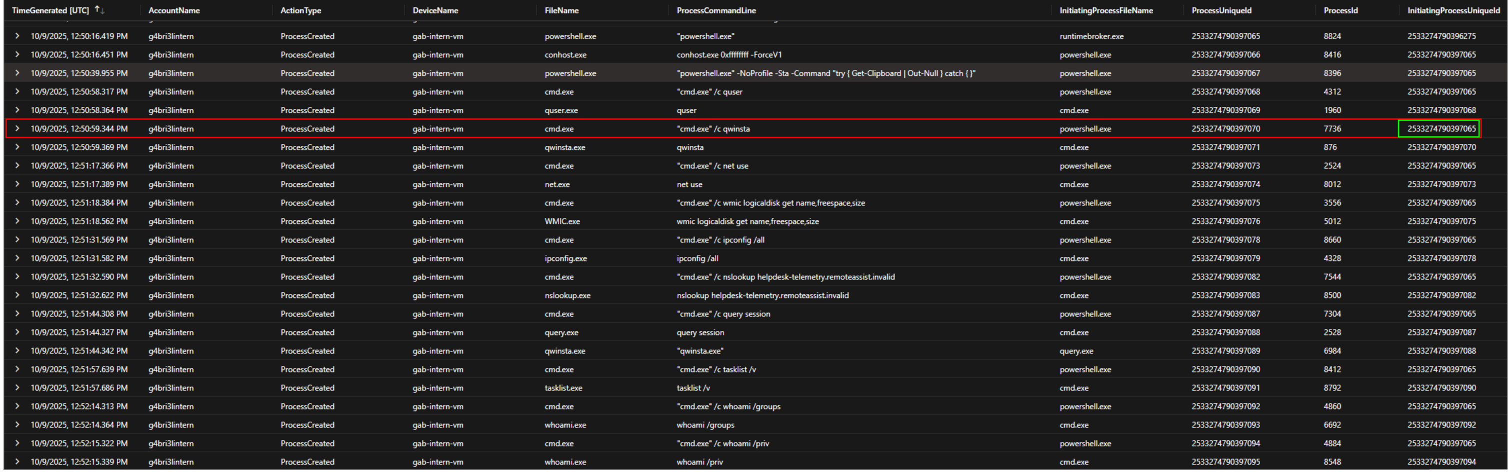
I was so stumped that I feel the process identification task number was staring at me. I had to pivot and got the hint from a user to project `InitiatingProcessUniqueId`

I should have considered the term `unique` in order to find the number of `InitiatingProcessUniqueId`

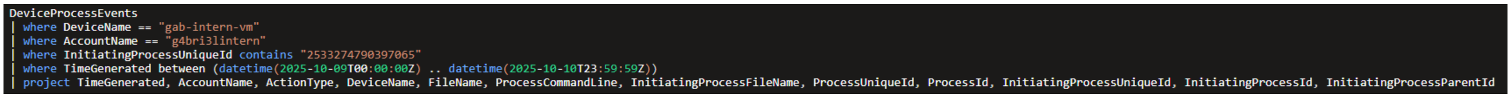
```
2533274790397065
```



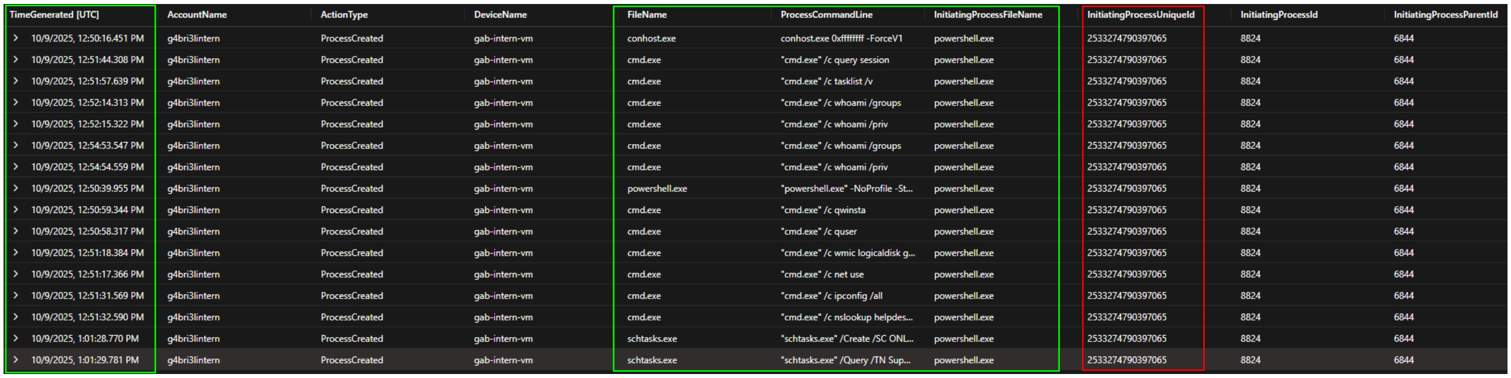
```
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-09T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-10T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, ProcessUniqueId, ProcessId, InitiatingProcessUniqueId, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentId
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	AccountName	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	ProcessCommandLine	InitiatingProcessFileName	ProcessUniqueId	ProcessId	InitiatingProcessUniqueId
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.419 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe"	runtimebroker.exe	2533274790397065	8824	2533274790396275
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.451 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	conhost.exe	conhost.exe 0xffffffff -ForceV1	powershell.exe	2533274790397066	8416	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:50:39.955 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"	powershell.exe	2533274790397067	8396	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:50:58.317 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c quser	powershell.exe	2533274790397068	4312	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:50:58.364 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	quser.exe	quser	cmd.exe	2533274790397069	1960	2533274790397068
10/9/2025, 12:50:59.344 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c qwinsta	powershell.exe	2533274790397070	7736	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:50:59.369 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	qwinsta.exe	qwinsta	cmd.exe	2533274790397071	876	2533274790397070
10/9/2025, 12:51:17.366 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c net use	powershell.exe	2533274790397073	2524	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:17.389 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	net.exe	net use	cmd.exe	2533274790397074	8012	2533274790397073
10/9/2025, 12:51:18.384 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk get name,freespace,size	powershell.exe	2533274790397075	3556	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:18.562 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	WMIC.exe	wmic logicaldisk get name,freespace,size	cmd.exe	2533274790397076	5012	2533274790397075
10/9/2025, 12:51:31.569 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c ipconfig /all	powershell.exe	2533274790397078	8660	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:31.582 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	ipconfig.exe	ipconfig /all	cmd.exe	2533274790397079	4328	2533274790397078
10/9/2025, 12:51:32.590 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c nslookup helpdesk-telemetry.remoteassist.invalid	powershell.exe	2533274790397082	7544	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:32.622 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	nslookup.exe	nslookup helpdesk-telemetry.remoteassist.invalid	cmd.exe	2533274790397083	8500	2533274790397082
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.308 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c query session	powershell.exe	2533274790397087	7304	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.327 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	query.exe	query session	cmd.exe	2533274790397088	2528	2533274790397087
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.342 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	qwinsta.exe	"qwinsta.exe"	query.exe	2533274790397089	6984	2533274790397088
10/9/2025, 12:51:57.639 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c tasklist /v	powershell.exe	2533274790397090	8412	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:51:57.686 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	tasklist.exe	tasklist /v	cmd.exe	2533274790397091	8792	2533274790397090
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.313 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups	powershell.exe	2533274790397092	4860	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.364 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /groups	cmd.exe	2533274790397093	6692	2533274790397092
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.322 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv	powershell.exe	2533274790397094	4884	2533274790397065
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.339 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /priv	cmd.exe	2533274790397095	8548	2533274790397094

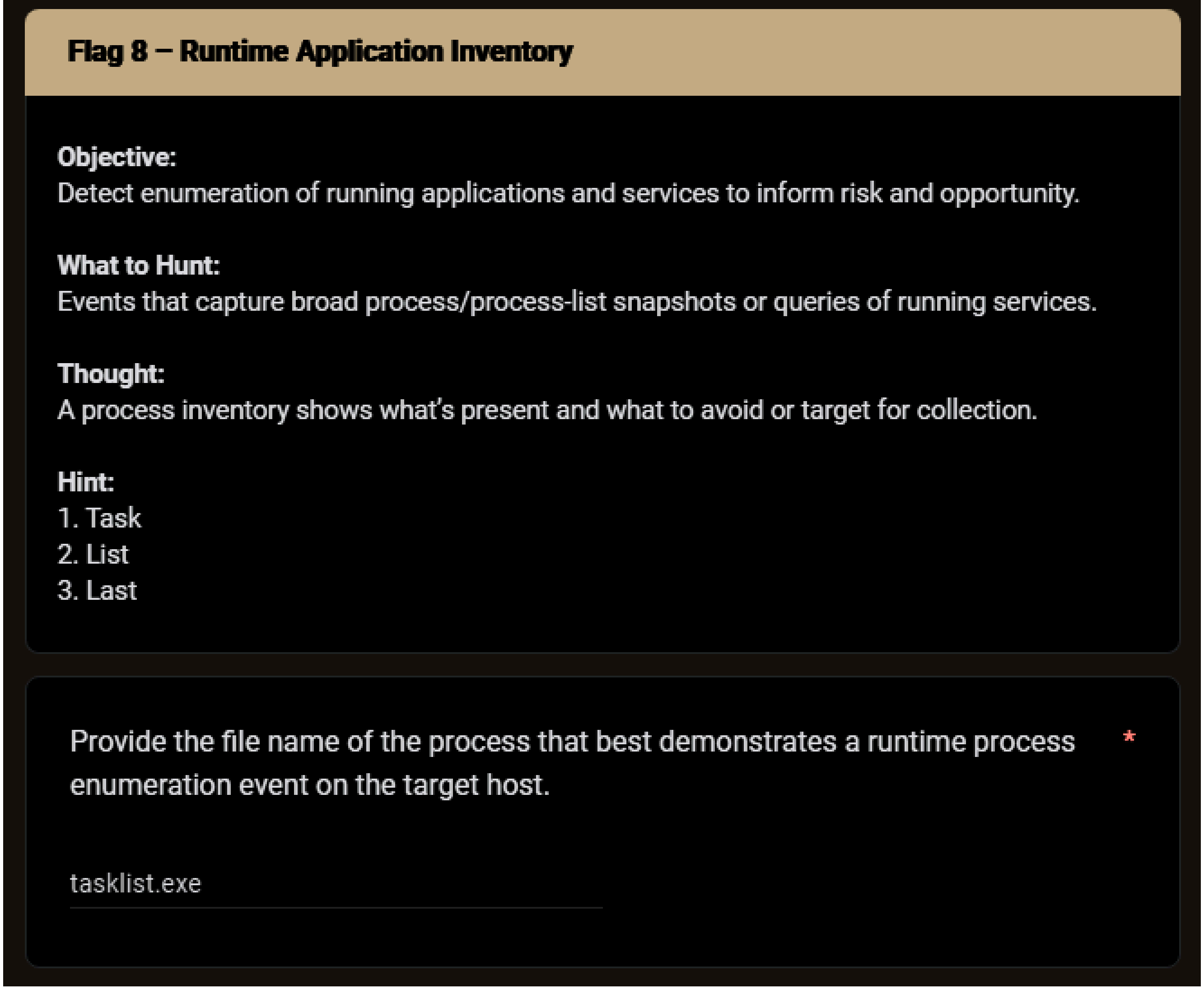


```
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where InitiatingProcessUniqueId contains "2533274790397065"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-09T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-10T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, ProcessUniqueId, ProcessId, InitiatingProcessUniqueId, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentId
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	AccountName	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	ProcessCommandLine	InitiatingProcessFileName	InitiatingProcessUniqueId	InitiatingProcessId	InitiatingProcessParentId
10/9/2025, 12:50:16.451 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	conhost.exe	conhost.exe 0xffffffff -ForceV1	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:44.308 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c query session	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:57.639 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c tasklist /v	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.313 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.322 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:54:53.547 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:54:54.559 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:50:39.955 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	powershell.exe	"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -St...	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:50:59.344 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c qwinsta	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:50:58.317 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c quser	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:18.384 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk g...	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:17.366 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c net use	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:31.569 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c ipconfig /all	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 12:51:32.590 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c nslookup helpdes...	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 1:01:28.770 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	schtasks.exe	"schtasks.exe" /Create /SC ONL...	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
10/9/2025, 1:01:29.781 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	schtasks.exe	"schtasks.exe" /Query /TN Sup...	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844

Flag 8 - Runtime Application Inventory



Flag 8 – Runtime Application Inventory

Objective:
Detect enumeration of running applications and services to inform risk and opportunity.

What to Hunt:
Events that capture broad process/process-list snapshots or queries of running services.

Thought:
A process inventory shows what's present and what to avoid or target for collection.

Hint:
1. Task
2. List
3. Last

Provide the file name of the process that best demonstrates a runtime process enumeration event on the target host. *

tasklist.exe

They want the *file name* of the process that shows:

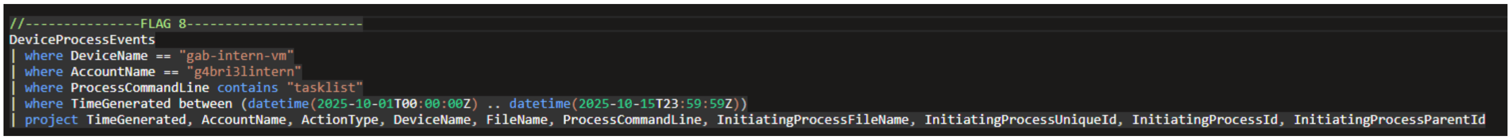
- `"runtime process enumeration"
- `"process-list snapshots"
- `"queries of running services"

And the hint:

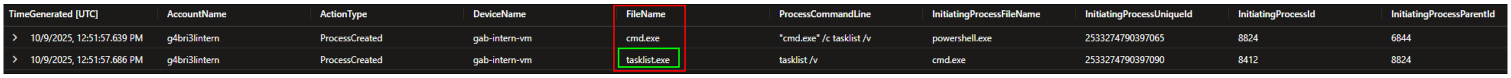
1. `Task
2. `List
3. `Last

This is pointing directly at:

`tasklist.exe`

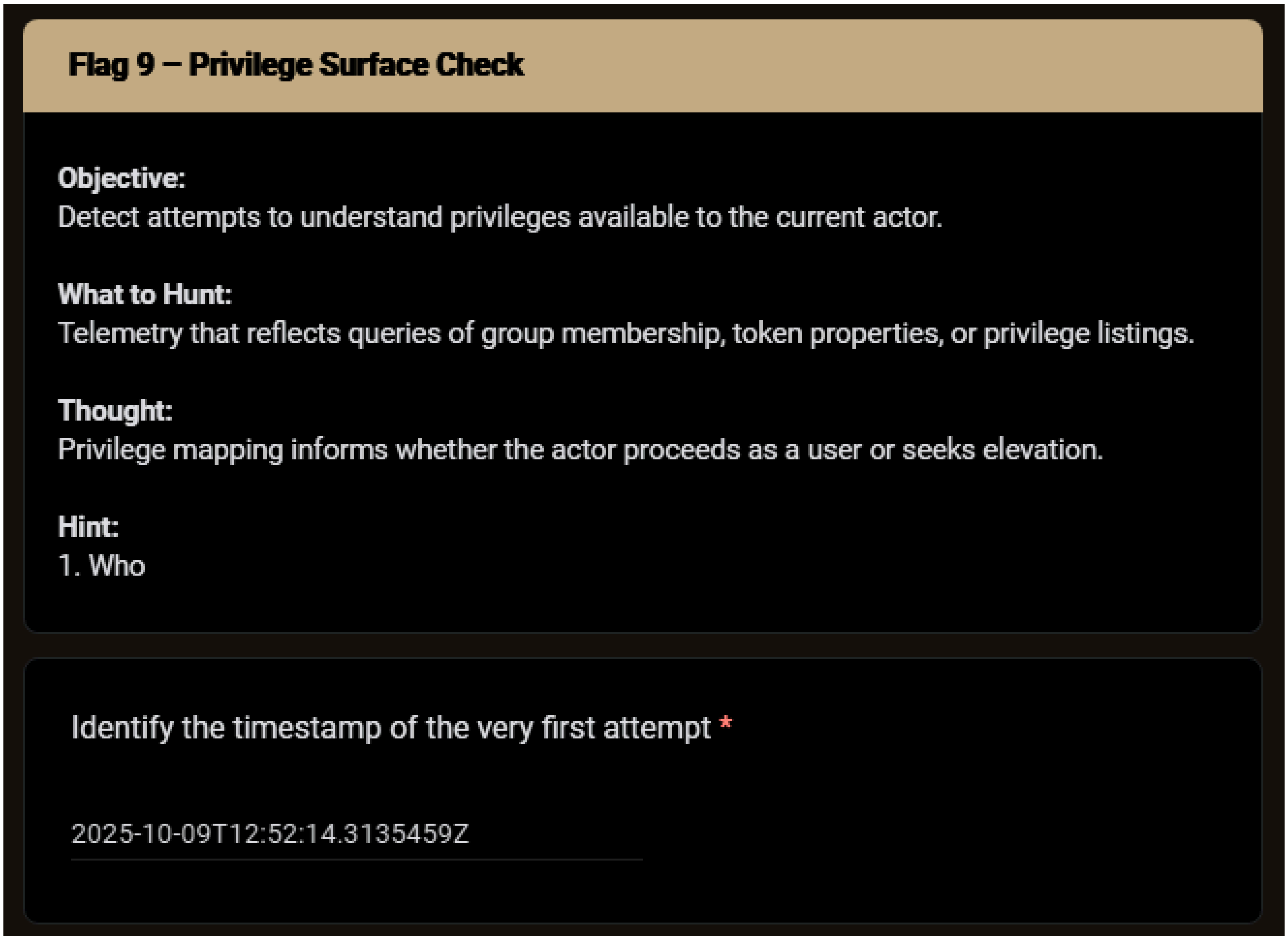


```
//---------------FLAG 8----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where ProcessCommandLine contains "tasklist"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessUniqueId, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentId
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	AccountName	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	ProcessCommandLine	InitiatingProcessFileName	InitiatingProcessUniqueId	InitiatingProcessId	InitiatingProcessParentId
> 10/9/2025, 12:51:57.639 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c tasklist /v	powershell.exe	2533274790397065	8824	6844
> 10/9/2025, 12:51:57.686 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	tasklist.exe	tasklist /v	cmd.exe	2533274790397090	8412	8824

Flag 9 - Privilege Surface Check



Flag 9 – Privilege Surface Check

Objective:
Detect attempts to understand privileges available to the current actor.

What to Hunt:
Telemetry that reflects queries of group membership, token properties, or privilege listings.

Thought:
Privilege mapping informs whether the actor proceeds as a user or seeks elevation.

Hint:
1. Who

Identify the timestamp of the very first attempt *

2025-10-09T12:52:14.3135459Z

Objective

> Detect attempts to understand privileges available to the current actor.

This means: **we're hunting for commands that ask "who am I?" or "what privileges do I have?"**

What to Hunt

> Queries of group membership, token properties, or privilege listings.

That's `whoami` territory.

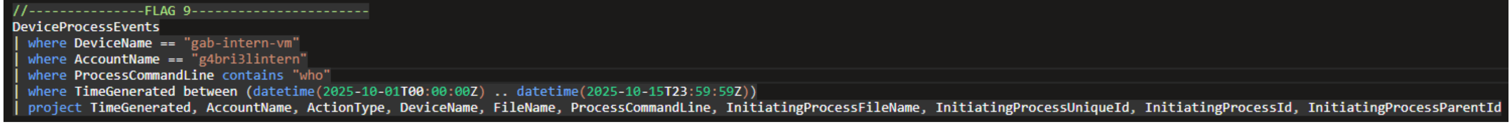
Hint:

1. Who

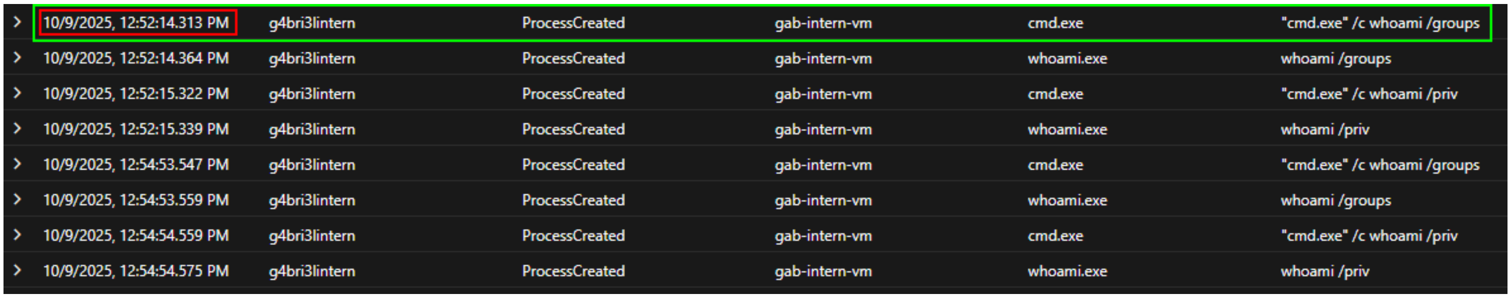
> **Identify the timestamp of the very first attempt.**

```
The timestamp of the earliest privilege-checking event.
```

`TimeGenerated`
`2025-10-09T12:52:14.3135459Z`



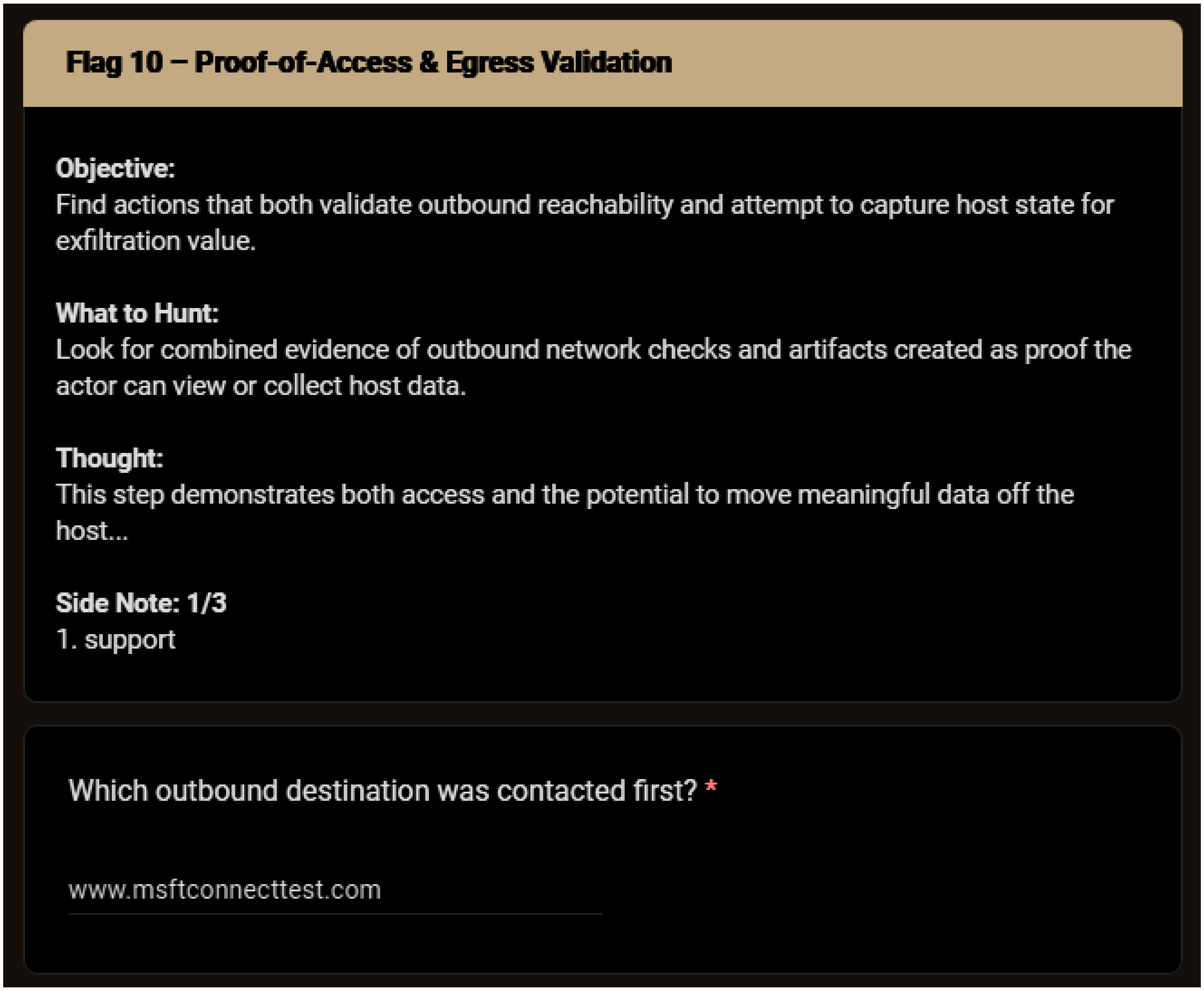
```
//---------------FLAG 9----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where ProcessCommandLine contains "who"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessUniqueId, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentId
```



10/9/2025, 12:52:14.313 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:52:14.364 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.322 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv
10/9/2025, 12:52:15.339 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /priv
10/9/2025, 12:54:53.547 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:54:53.559 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /groups
10/9/2025, 12:54:54.559 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	cmd.exe	"cmd.exe" /c whoami /priv
10/9/2025, 12:54:54.575 PM	g4bri3lintern	ProcessCreated	gab-intern-vm	whoami.exe	whoami /priv

---

Flag 10 - Proof-of-Access & Egress Validation



Flag 10 – Proof-of-Access & Egress Validation

Objective:
Find actions that both validate outbound reachability and attempt to capture host state for exfiltration value.

What to Hunt:
Look for combined evidence of outbound network checks and artifacts created as proof the actor can view or collect host data.

Thought:
This step demonstrates both access and the potential to move meaningful data off the host...

Side Note: 1/3
1. support

Which outbound destination was contacted first? *

www.msftconnecttest.com

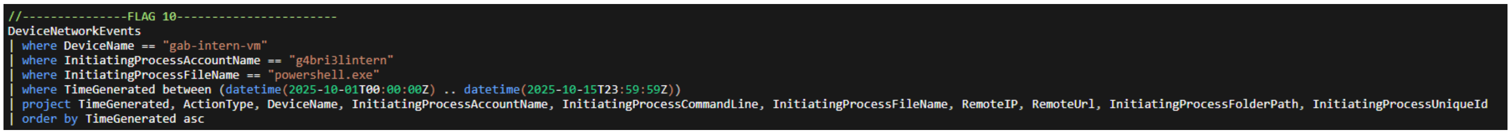
Outbound Contact = Anything the host reaches OUT to

In other words:

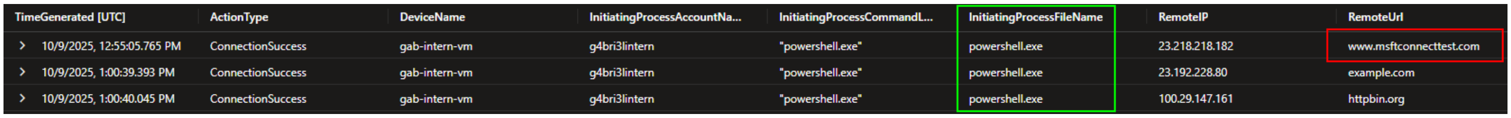
- `DNS lookups
- `HTTP(S) requests
- `TCP/IP connections to external hosts

- `Ping / ICMP echo requests
- `Anything that leaves the VM and touches the internet or another host

Defender logs this as `DeviceNetworkEvents.`
Decided to check the `RemoteUrl` column for outbound connections that were being tested with powershell.exe results below were the only existing domains to an unusual destination.



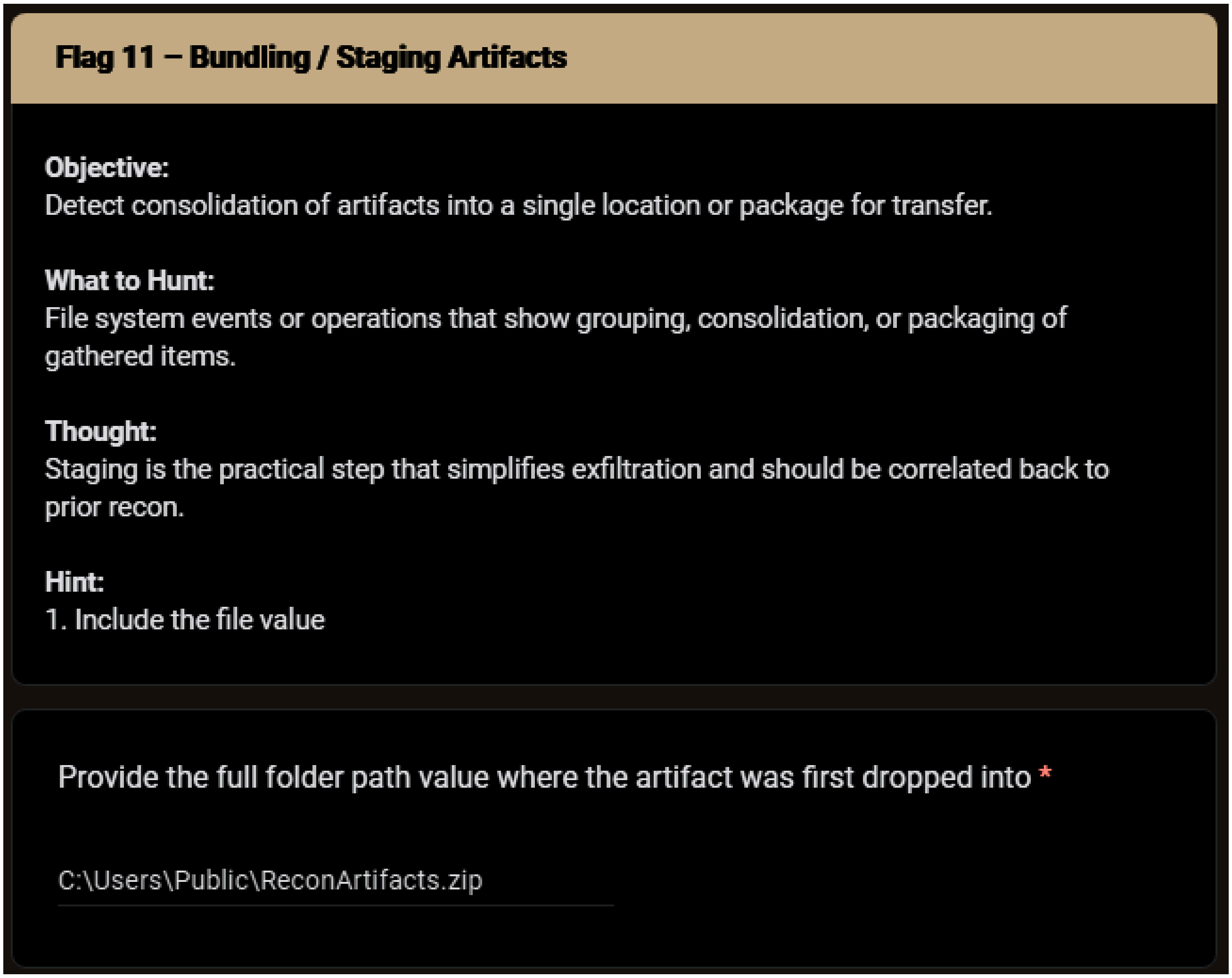
```
//---------------FLAG 10-----------------------
DeviceNetworkEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where InitiatingProcessAccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where InitiatingProcessFileName == "powershell.exe"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, InitiatingProcessAccountName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, RemoteIP, RemoteUrl, InitiatingProcessFolderPath, InitiatingProcessUniqueId
| order by TimeGenerated asc
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	InitiatingProcessAccountNa...	InitiatingProcessCommandL...	InitiatingProcessFileName	RemoteIP	RemoteUrl
› 10/9/2025, 12:55:05.765 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	23.218.218.182	www.msftconnecttest.com
› 10/9/2025, 1:00:39.393 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	23.192.228.80	example.com
› 10/9/2025, 1:00:40.045 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	100.29.147.161	httpbin.org

---

Flag 11 - Bundling / Staging Artifacts



Flag 11 – Bundling / Staging Artifacts

Objective:
Detect consolidation of artifacts into a single location or package for transfer.

What to Hunt:
File system events or operations that show grouping, consolidation, or packaging of gathered items.

Thought:
Staging is the practical step that simplifies exfiltration and should be correlated back to prior recon.

Hint:
1. Include the file value

Provide the full folder path value where the artifact was first dropped into *

C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip

Dropped at:

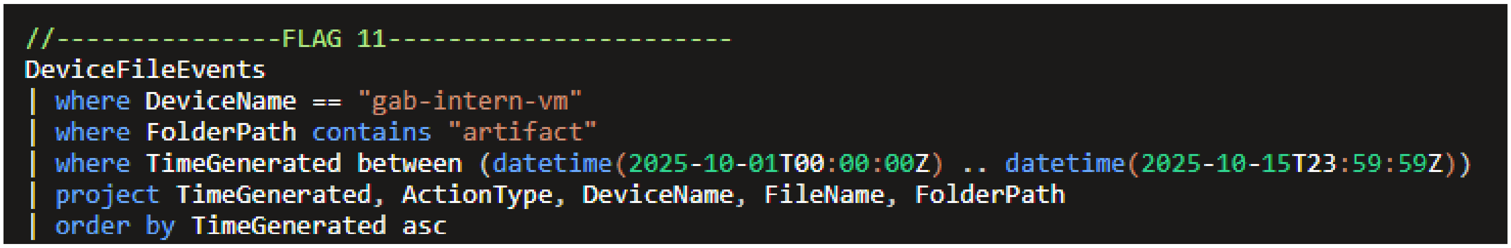
`C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip`

And the logs confirm it perfectly:

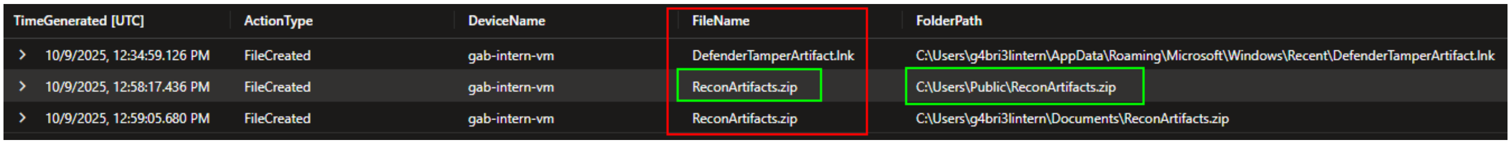
- First created → `12:58:17.436 PM`, in *Public*
- Then copied or moved → *Documents*
- But they specifically ask for "first dropped", meaning the public directory.

Exactly the kind of staging behavior attackers love:

- `Public is world-writable
- `No elevation required
- `No user desktop pop-ups
- `Easy to exfiltrate quietly

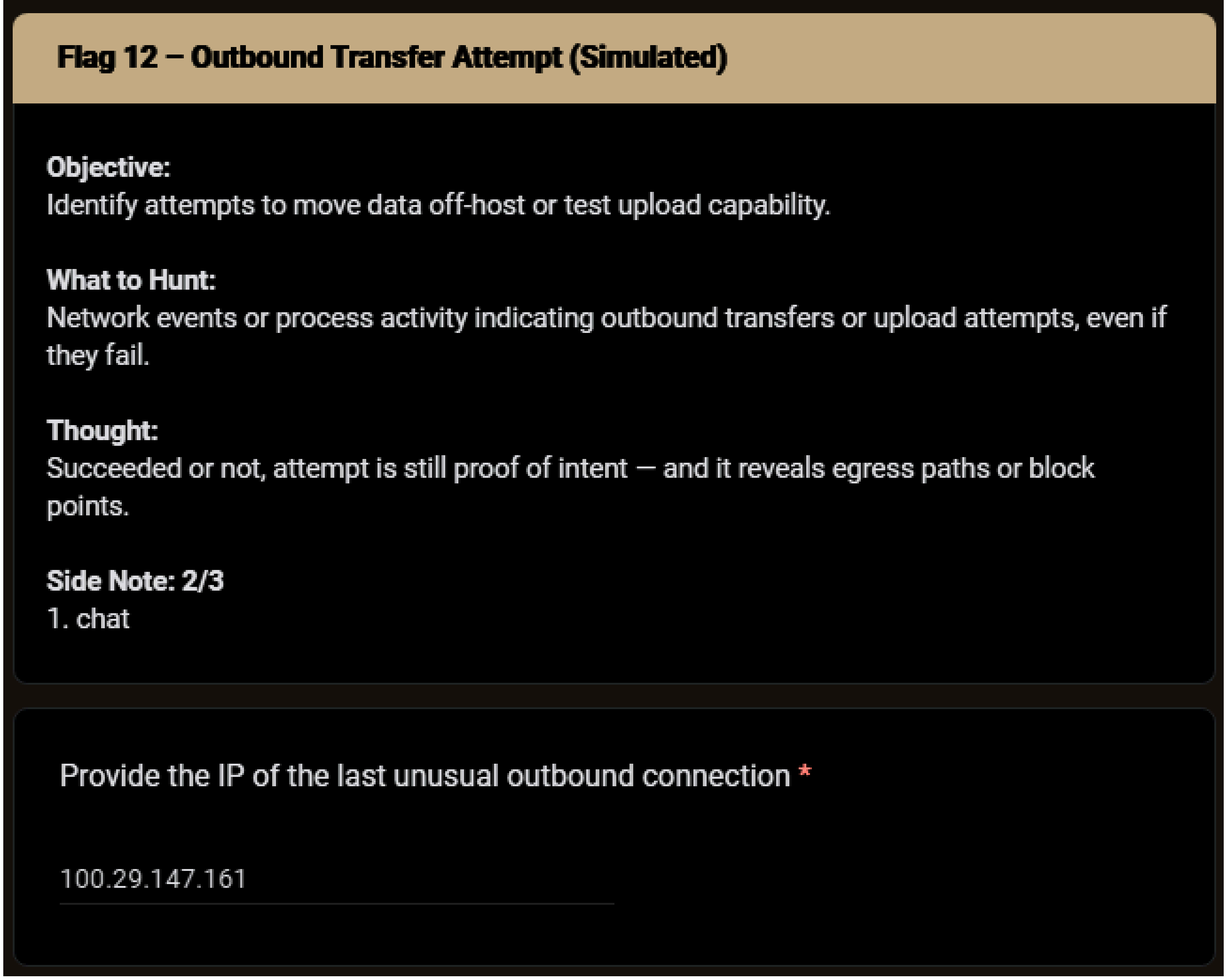


```
//---------------FLAG 11-----------------------
DeviceFileEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where FolderPath contains "artifact"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath
| order by TimeGenerated asc
```



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName	FolderPath
10/9/2025, 12:34:59.126 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk
10/9/2025, 12:58:17.436 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip
10/9/2025, 12:59:05.680 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ReconArtifacts.zip	C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Documents\ReconArtifacts.zip

Flag 12 - Outbound Transfer Attempt



Flag 12 – Outbound Transfer Attempt (Simulated)

Objective:
Identify attempts to move data off-host or test upload capability.

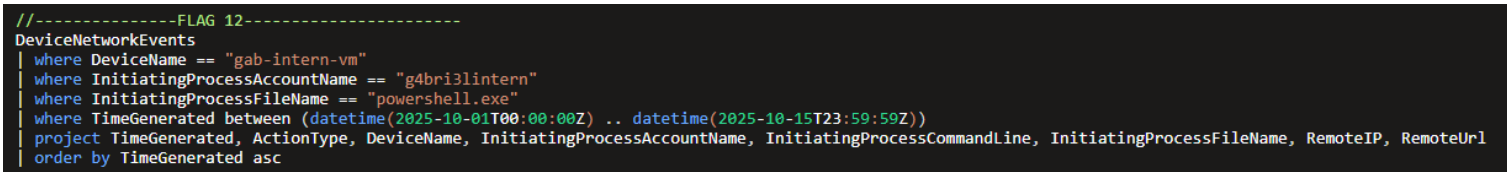
What to Hunt:
Network events or process activity indicating outbound transfers or upload attempts, even if they fail.

Thought:
Succeeded or not, attempt is still proof of intent — and it reveals egress paths or block points.

Side Note: 2/3
1. chat

Provide the IP of the last unusual outbound connection *

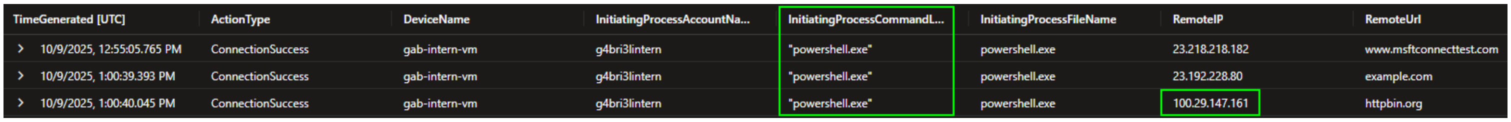
100.29.147.161



```
//--------------FLAG 12----------------------
DeviceNetworkEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where InitiatingProcessAccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where InitiatingProcessFileName == "powershell.exe"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, InitiatingProcessAccountName, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, RemoteIP, RemoteUrl
| order by TimeGenerated asc
```

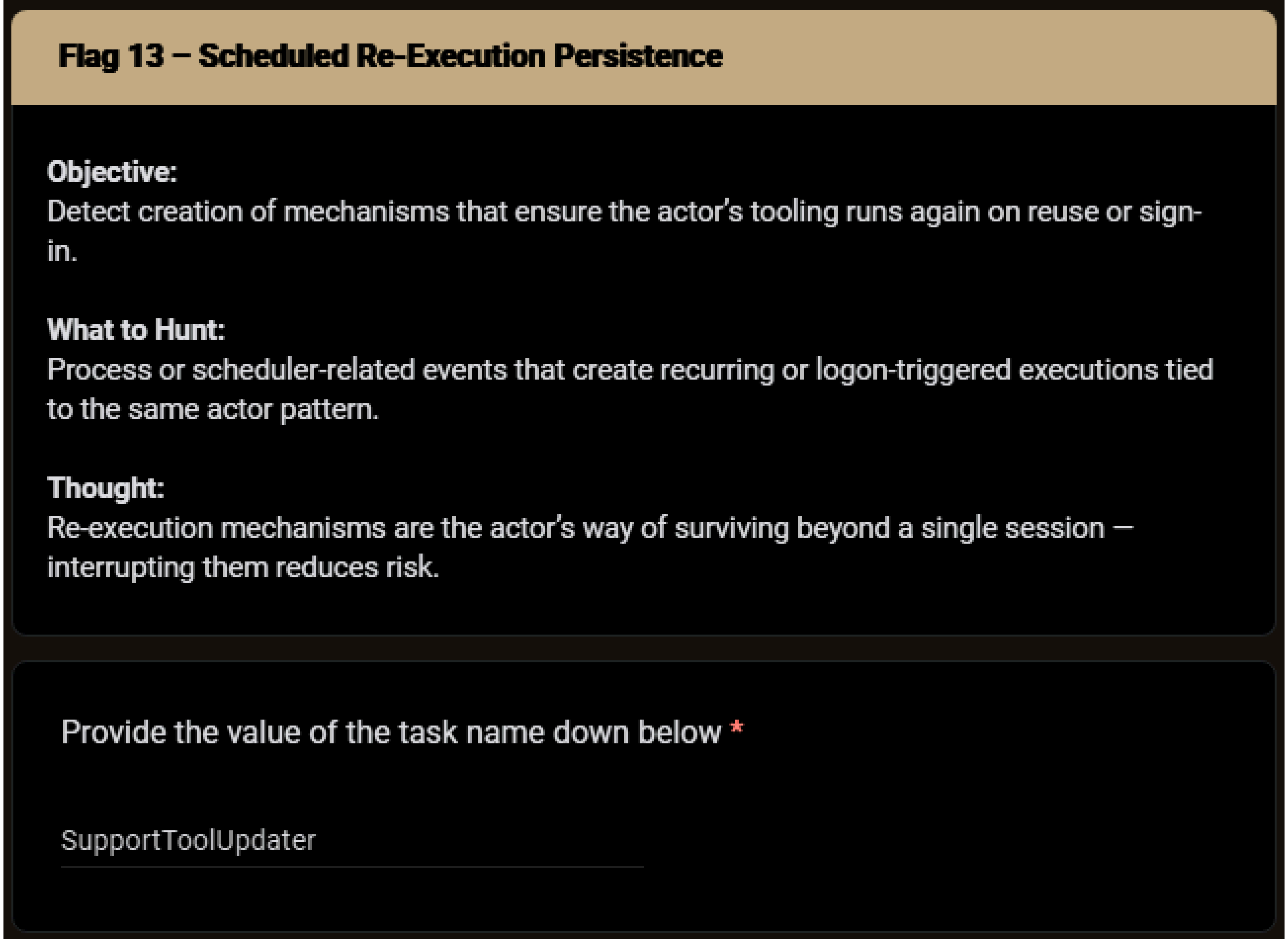
Recall the same query from Flag 10. The IP of the last unusual outbound connection was listed to a website called `httpbin.org` .

The `RemoteIP` column showed the IP, `100.29.147.161` , of the outbound connection



TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	InitiatingProcessAccountNa...	InitiatingProcessCommandL...	InitiatingProcessFileName	RemoteIP	RemoteUrl
> 10/9/2025, 12:55:05.765 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	23.218.218.182	www.msftconnecttest.com
> 10/9/2025, 1:00:39.393 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	23.192.228.80	example.com
> 10/9/2025, 1:00:40.045 PM	ConnectionSuccess	gab-intern-vm	g4bri3lintern	"powershell.exe"	powershell.exe	100.29.147.161	httpbin.org

Flag 13 - Scheduled Re-Execution Persistence



Flag 13 – Scheduled Re-Execution Persistence

Objective:
Detect creation of mechanisms that ensure the actor's tooling runs again on reuse or sign-in.

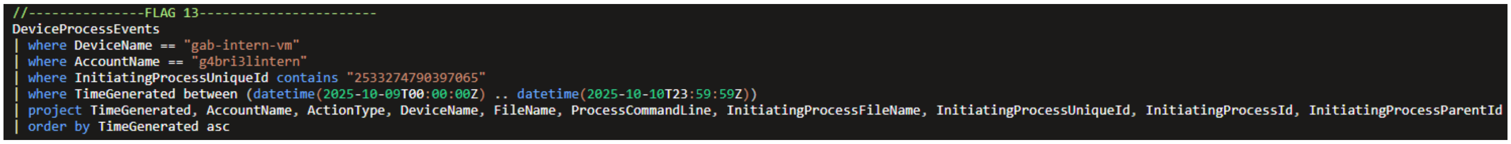
What to Hunt:
Process or scheduler-related events that create recurring or logon-triggered executions tied to the same actor pattern.

Thought:
Re-execution mechanisms are the actor's way of surviving beyond a single session — interrupting them reduces risk.

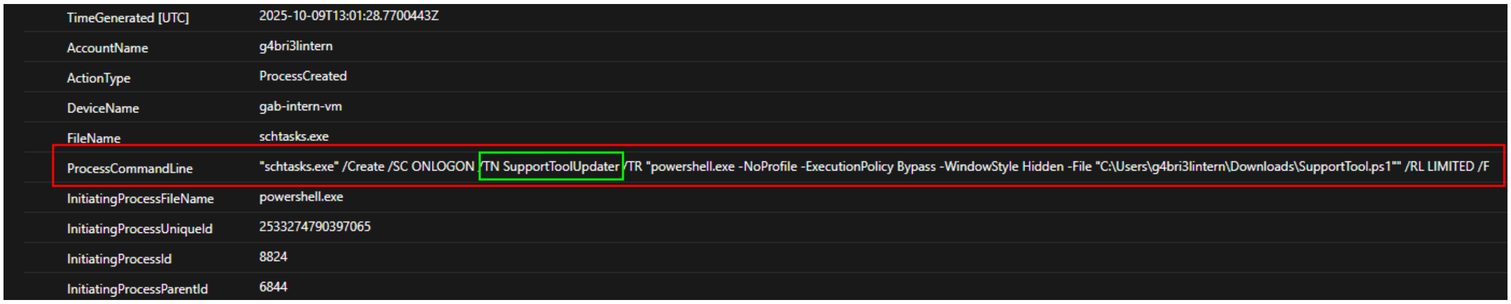
Provide the value of the task name down below *

SupportToolUpdater

The question asks for `task name`



```
//---------------FLAG 13-----------------------
DeviceProcessEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where AccountName == "g4bri3lintern"
| where InitiatingProcessUniqueId contains "2533274790397065"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-09T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-10T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, AccountName, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, ProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessUniqueId, InitiatingProcessId, InitiatingProcessParentId
| order by TimeGenerated asc
```

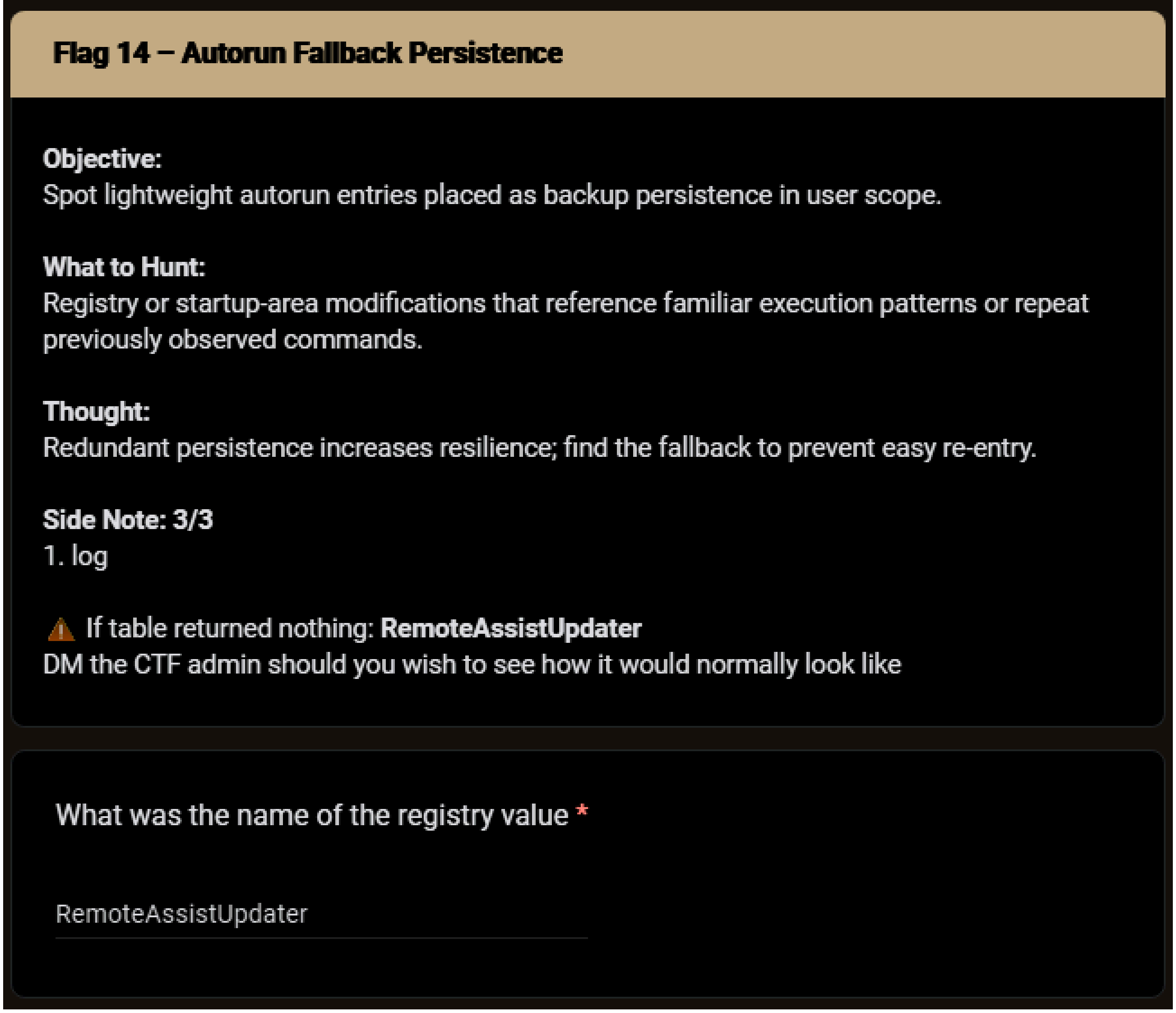


TimeGenerated [UTC]	2025-10-09T13:01:28.7700443Z
AccountName	g4bri3lintern
ActionType	ProcessCreated
DeviceName	gab-intern-vm
FileName	schtasks.exe
ProcessCommandLine	"schtasks.exe" /Create /SC ONLOGON /TN SupportToolUpdater /TR "powershell.exe -NoProfile -ExecutionPolicy Bypass -WindowStyle Hidden -File "C:\Users\g4bri3lintern\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1"" /RL LIMITED /F
InitiatingProcessFileName	powershell.exe
InitiatingProcessUniqueId	2533274790397065
InitiatingProcessId	8824
InitiatingProcessParentId	6844

We can see in the output of `schtasks.exe` that the task name `/TN` flag is part of the process command line.

We can see the value of the task name is `SupportToolUpdater`

Flag 14 - Autorun Fallback Persistence



Flag 14 – Autorun Fallback Persistence

Objective:
Spot lightweight autorun entries placed as backup persistence in user scope.

What to Hunt:
Registry or startup-area modifications that reference familiar execution patterns or repeat previously observed commands.

Thought:
Redundant persistence increases resilience; find the fallback to prevent easy re-entry.

Side Note: 3/3
1. log

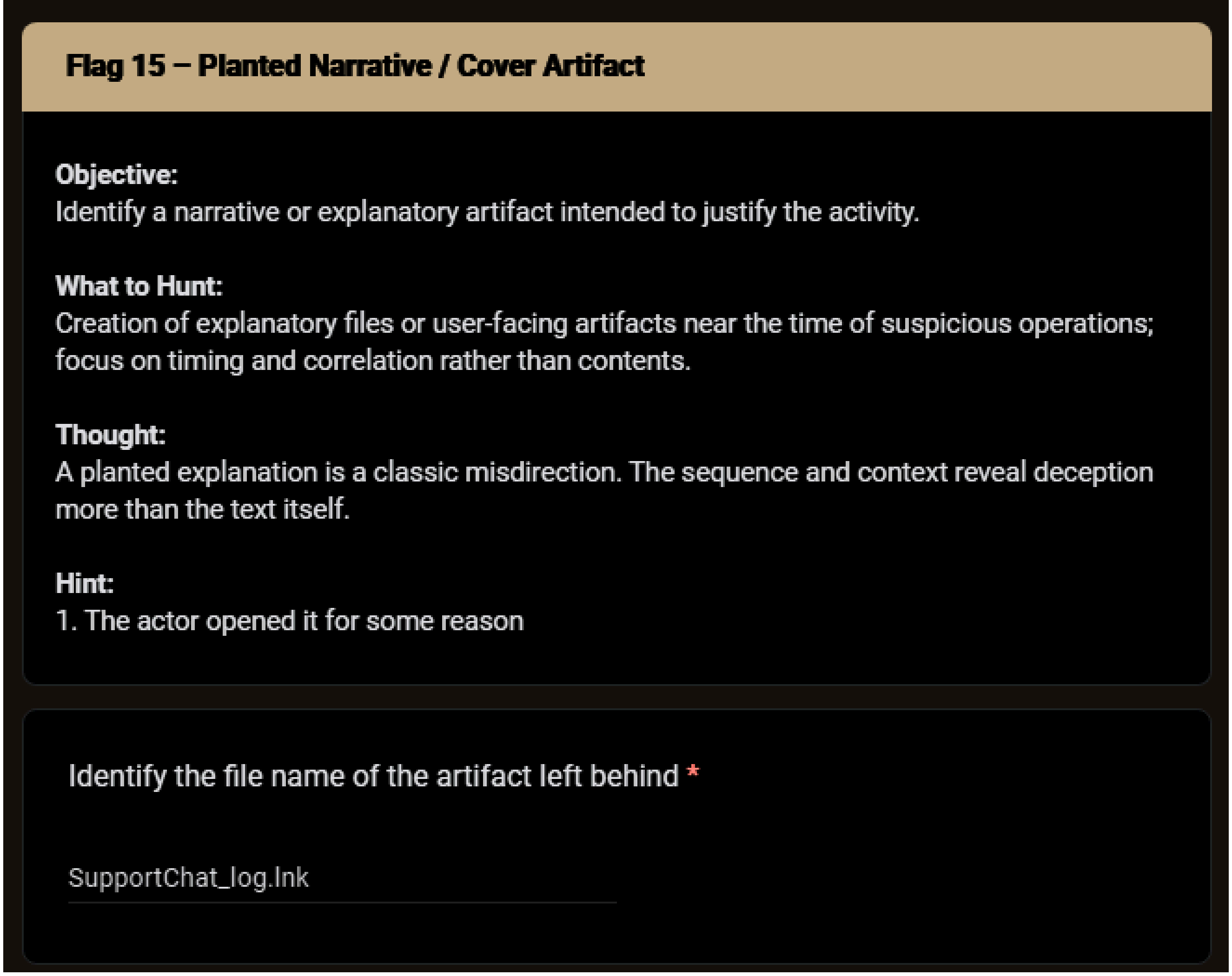
⚠ If table returned nothing: **RemoteAssistUpdater**
DM the CTF admin should you wish to see how it would normally look like

What was the name of the registry value *

RemoteAssistUpdater

The table `RemoteAssistUpdater` returned nothing.

Flag 15 - Planted Narrative / Cover Artifact



Flag 15 – Planted Narrative / Cover Artifact

Objective:
Identify a narrative or explanatory artifact intended to justify the activity.

What to Hunt:
Creation of explanatory files or user-facing artifacts near the time of suspicious operations; focus on timing and correlation rather than contents.

Thought:
A planted explanation is a classic misdirection. The sequence and context reveal deception more than the text itself.

Hint:
1. The actor opened it for some reason

Identify the file name of the artifact left behind *

SupportChat_log.lnk

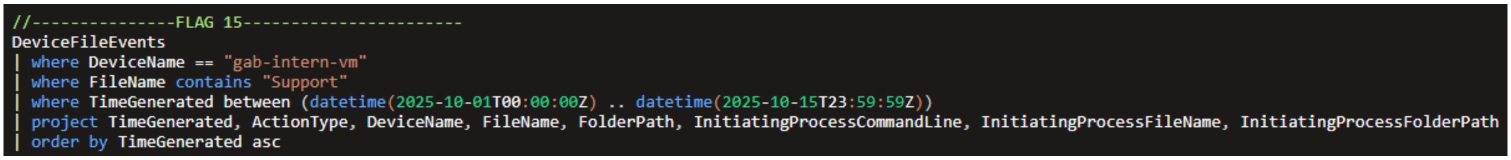
The actor **left a cover story behind**, and the hint gives it away:

> **Hint:** The actor opened it for some reason.

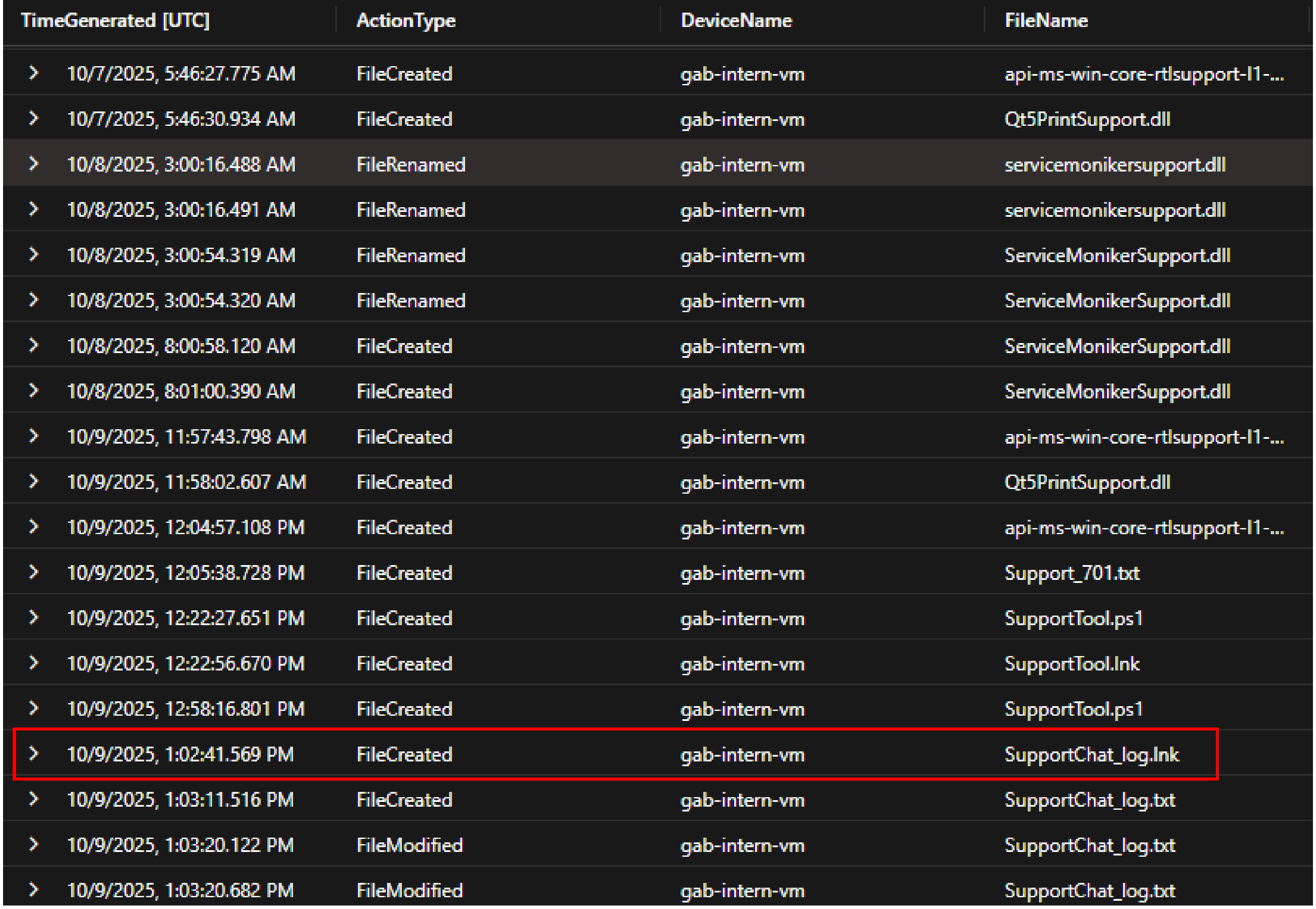
That means we're hunting for a file the attacker **manually opened**, likely something meant to *explain* or *justify* what they were doing.

The attacker delivered `SupportTool.ps1` to the victim's Downloads folder and then executed it via the Windows shell, causing Explorer to create `SupportTool.lnk` in the Recent items directory.

This ties the script to an interactive session (likely the `g4bri3Intern` profile) and demonstrates user-level execution (MITRE ATT&CK T1204 – User Execution).

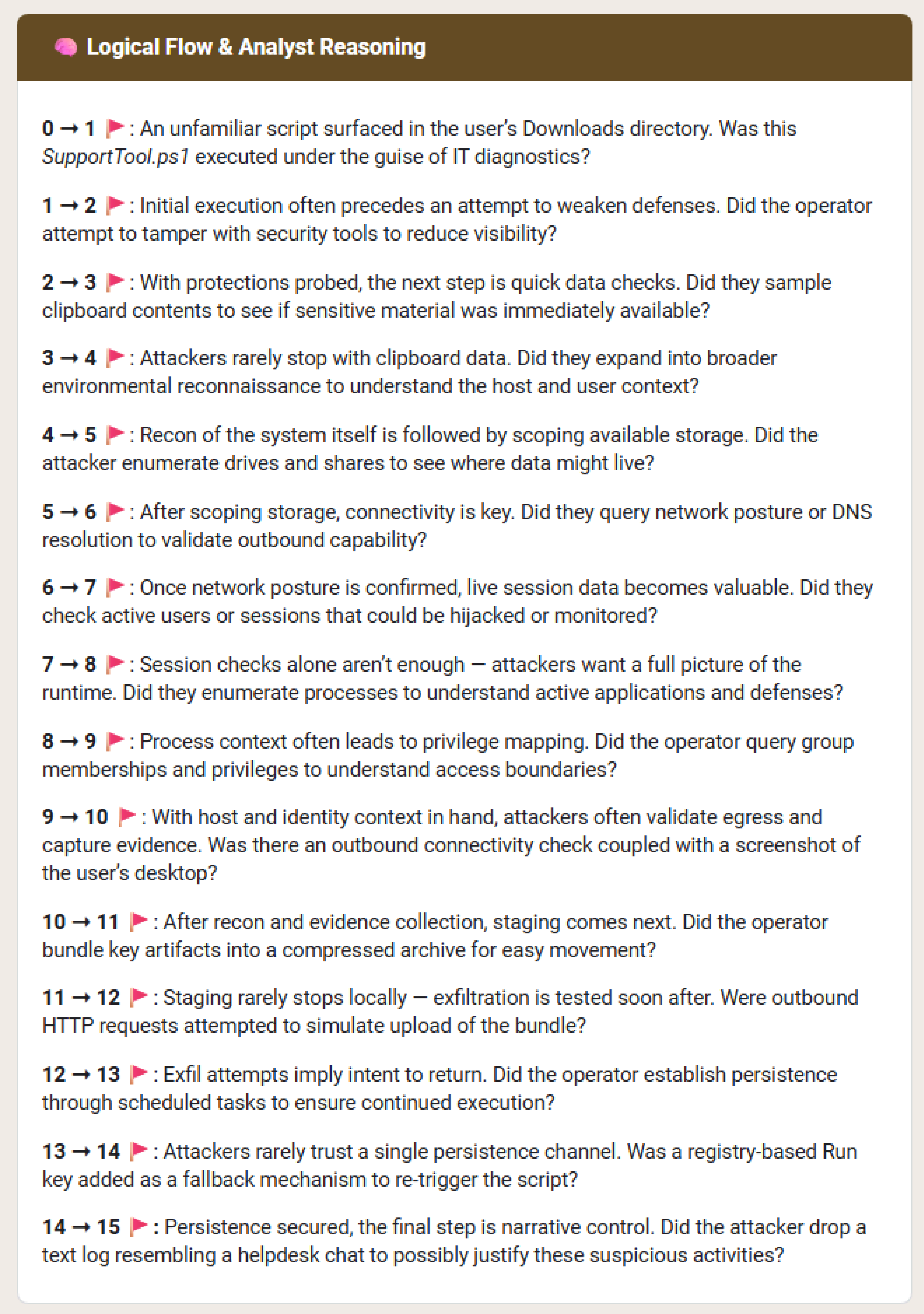


```
//---------------FLAG 15----------------------
DeviceFileEvents
| where DeviceName == "gab-intern-vm"
| where FileName contains "Support"
| where TimeGenerated between (datetime(2025-10-01T00:00:00Z) .. datetime(2025-10-15T23:59:59Z))
| project TimeGenerated, ActionType, DeviceName, FileName, FolderPath, InitiatingProcessCommandLine, InitiatingProcessFileName, InitiatingProcessFolderPath
| order by TimeGenerated asc
```



	TimeGenerated [UTC]	ActionType	DeviceName	FileName
>	10/7/2025, 5:46:27.775 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	api-ms-win-core-rtlsupport-l1-...
>	10/7/2025, 5:46:30.934 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	Qt5PrintSupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 3:00:16.488 AM	FileRenamed	gab-intern-vm	servicemonikersupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 3:00:16.491 AM	FileRenamed	gab-intern-vm	servicemonikersupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 3:00:54.319 AM	FileRenamed	gab-intern-vm	ServiceMonikerSupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 3:00:54.320 AM	FileRenamed	gab-intern-vm	ServiceMonikerSupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 8:00:58.120 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ServiceMonikerSupport.dll
>	10/8/2025, 8:01:00.390 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	ServiceMonikerSupport.dll
>	10/9/2025, 11:57:43.798 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	api-ms-win-core-rtlsupport-l1-...
>	10/9/2025, 11:58:02.607 AM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	Qt5PrintSupport.dll
>	10/9/2025, 12:04:57.108 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	api-ms-win-core-rtlsupport-l1-...
>	10/9/2025, 12:05:38.728 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	Support_701.txt
>	10/9/2025, 12:22:27.651 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.ps1
>	10/9/2025, 12:22:56.670 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.lnk
>	10/9/2025, 12:58:16.801 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportTool.ps1
>	10/9/2025, 1:02:41.569 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportChat_log.lnk
>	10/9/2025, 1:03:11.516 PM	FileCreated	gab-intern-vm	SupportChat_log.txt
>	10/9/2025, 1:03:20.122 PM	FileModified	gab-intern-vm	SupportChat_log.txt
>	10/9/2025, 1:03:20.682 PM	FileModified	gab-intern-vm	SupportChat_log.txt

Logical Flow & Analyst Reasoning



🧠 Logical Flow & Analyst Reasoning

0 → 1 🚩: An unfamiliar script surfaced in the user's Downloads directory. Was this *SupportTool.ps1* executed under the guise of IT diagnostics?

1 → 2 🚩: Initial execution often precedes an attempt to weaken defenses. Did the operator attempt to tamper with security tools to reduce visibility?

2 → 3 🚩: With protections probed, the next step is quick data checks. Did they sample clipboard contents to see if sensitive material was immediately available?

3 → 4 🚩: Attackers rarely stop with clipboard data. Did they expand into broader environmental reconnaissance to understand the host and user context?

4 → 5 🚩: Recon of the system itself is followed by scoping available storage. Did the attacker enumerate drives and shares to see where data might live?

5 → 6 🚩: After scoping storage, connectivity is key. Did they query network posture or DNS resolution to validate outbound capability?

6 → 7 🚩: Once network posture is confirmed, live session data becomes valuable. Did they check active users or sessions that could be hijacked or monitored?

7 → 8 🚩: Session checks alone aren't enough — attackers want a full picture of the runtime. Did they enumerate processes to understand active applications and defenses?

8 → 9 🚩: Process context often leads to privilege mapping. Did the operator query group memberships and privileges to understand access boundaries?

9 → 10 🚩: With host and identity context in hand, attackers often validate egress and capture evidence. Was there an outbound connectivity check coupled with a screenshot of the user's desktop?

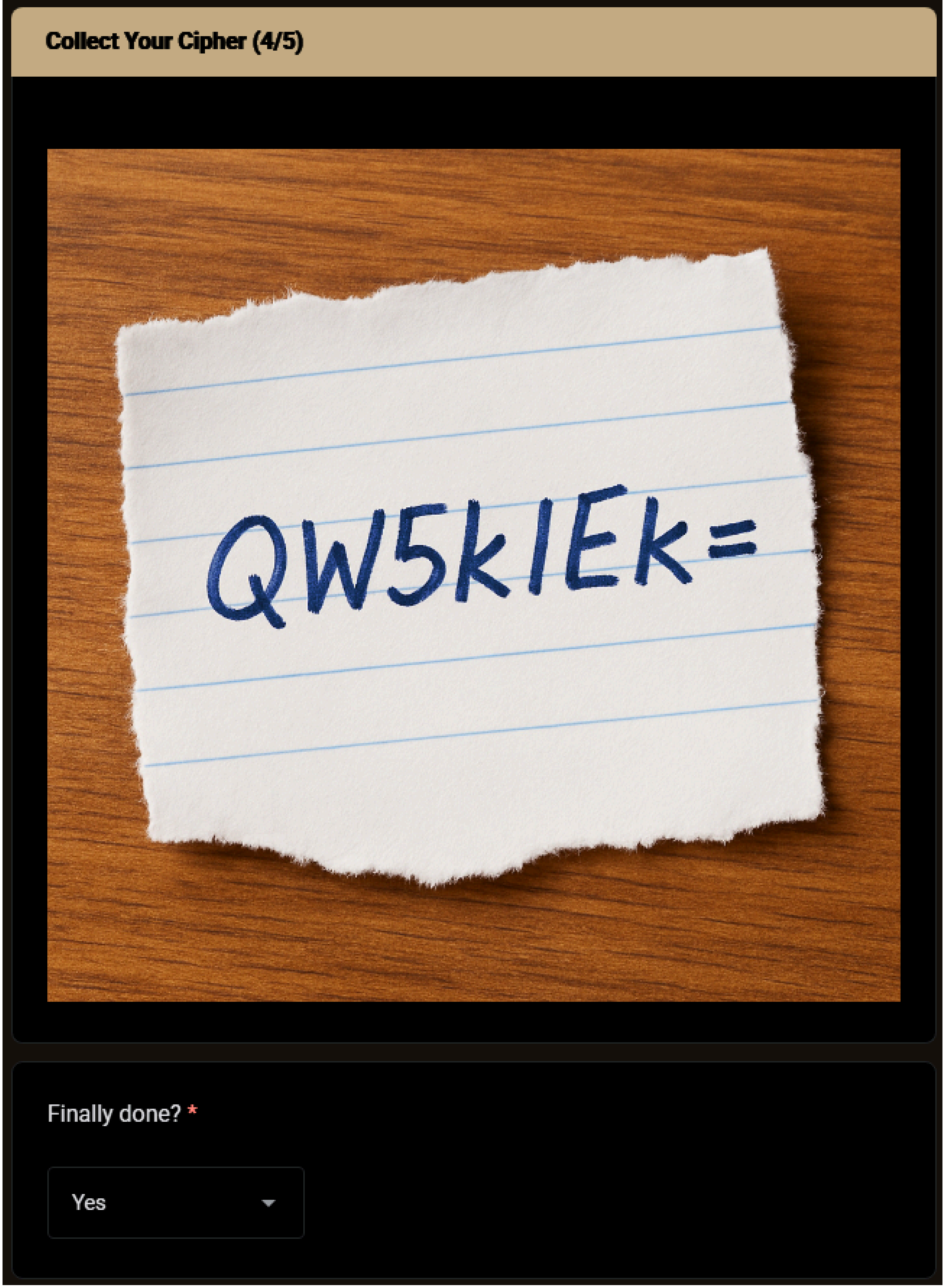
10 → 11 🚩: After recon and evidence collection, staging comes next. Did the operator bundle key artifacts into a compressed archive for easy movement?

11 → 12 🚩: Staging rarely stops locally — exfiltration is tested soon after. Were outbound HTTP requests attempted to simulate upload of the bundle?

12 → 13 🚩: Exfil attempts imply intent to return. Did the operator establish persistence through scheduled tasks to ensure continued execution?

13 → 14 🚩: Attackers rarely trust a single persistence channel. Was a registry-based Run key added as a fallback mechanism to re-trigger the script?

14 → 15 🚩**:** Persistence secured, the final step is narrative control. Did the attacker drop a text log resembling a helpdesk chat to possibly justify these suspicious activities?



Collect Your Cipher (4/5)

QW5kIEk=

Finally done? *

Yes

Final Notes / Findings

This incident simulated a realistic multi-stage intrusion:

- Initial foothold
- Reconnaissance
- Privilege assessment
- Local staging
- Persistence
- Attempted exfiltration
- Narrative manipulation

And every step was traceable using **Log Analytics KQL**, primarily through:

- `DeviceProcessEvents`
- `DeviceFileEvents`
- `DeviceNetworkEvents`

Flags → MITRE ATT&CK Mapping Table

Flag #	Flag Title	Observed Activity	MITRE ATT&CK Technique	Technique ID
1	Initial Execution Detection	PowerShell execution using `-ExecutionPolicy`	Command & Scripting Interpreter: PowerShell	**T1059.001**
2	Defense Disabling Indicator	Creation of malicious file `DefenderTamperArtifact.lnk`	Defense Evasion: Masquerading / Indirect Execution via LNK	**T1036 / T1204.002**
3	Quick Data Probe	Clipboard access using `"powershell.exe" -NoProfile -Sta -Command "try { Get-Clipboard | Out-Null } catch { }"`	Input Capture: Clipboard Data	**T1115**

4	Host Context Recon	Session enumeration (`qwinsta.exe`)
		`InitiatingProcessCommandLine "cmd.exe" /c query session`
		`Time Generated 2025-10-09T12:51:44.3272076Z`
			Account Discovery / System Owner-User Discovery	**T1087 / T1033**

5	Storage Surface	Disk/volume enumeration via `"cmd.exe" /c wmic logicaldisk get`	System Information	**T1082**

Flag #	Flag Title	Observed Activity	MITRE ATT&CK Technique	Technique ID
	Mapping	`name,freespace,size`	Discovery	
6	Connectivity & Name Resolution Check	Outbound DNS / connectivity testing via PowerShell `RuntimeBroker.exe`	Application Layer Protocol / DNS	**T1071 / T1071.004**

7	Interactive Session Discovery	Interactive session state checked (`query session`)
		`InitiatingProcessUniqueId`
		`2533274790397065`
			System Information Discovery / Remote Services Discovery	**T1082 / T1035**

8	Runtime Application Inventory	Process listing using `tasklist.exe`	Process Discovery	**T1057**
9	Privilege Surface Check	Privilege/user enumeration (`whoami /priv` , `/groups`) `TimeGenerated 2025-10-09T12:52:14.3135459Z`	Permission Group Discovery	**T1069**
10	Proof-of-Access & Egress Validation	Outbound contact to `msftconnecttest.com`	Exfiltration Test / Application Layer Protocol	**T1041 / T1071**
11	Bundling / Staging Artifacts	Staging of `ReconArtifacts.zip` in Public directory folderpath `C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip`	Archive Collected Data	**T1560**
12	Outbound Transfer Attempt	Outbound HTTP traffic to `100.29.147.161`	Exfiltration Over Web Services	**T1567.002**
13	Scheduled Re-Execution Persistence	Scheduled Task: `SupportToolUpdater`	Scheduled Task/Job: Scheduled Task	**T1053.005**
14	Autorun Fallback Persistence	Registry persistence value `RemoteAssistUpdater`	Registry Run Keys / Startup Folder	**T1547.001**

Flag #	Flag Title	Observed Activity	MITRE ATT&CK Technique	Technique ID
15	Planted Narrative / Cover Artifact	Fake support file: `SupportChat_log.lnk`	Masquerading (Fake File / Cover Story)	**T1036**

Summary of ATT&CK Categories Used

Category	Techniques Used
Execution	T1059.001
Defense Evasion	T1036, T1204.002
Credential Access	T1115
Discovery	T1033, T1082, T1057, T1069
Lateral Movement Prep / Recon	T1035
Command & Control / Network	T1071, T1071.004
Collection	T1560
Exfiltration	T1041, T1567.002
Persistence	T1053.005, T1547.001

Lessons Learned

Mitigations for This Threat Hunt

Each mitigation is mapped to the techniques observed in the hunt, prioritized by impact and feasibility.

🔒 1. Strengthen PowerShell Logging & Restrictions

Why: Nearly all malicious activity in this scenario involved PowerShell:

- ExecutionPolicy bypass
- Hidden windows
- Script execution from Downloads
- Clipboard scraping attempts
- File staging and exfil tests

Mitigations:

- Enable **PowerShell Script Block Logging** (4104)
- Enable **Module Logging**
- Enable **PowerShell Transcription**
- Enforce **Constrained Language Mode** for non-admins
- Block **ExecutionPolicy Bypass** via GPO:

`Computer Configuration → Administrative Templates → Windows Components → PowerShell "Turn on Script Execution" → Allow only signed scripts`

- Deploy **AppLocker** or **Windows Defender Application Control (WDAC)** rules to block PowerShell.exe for standard users

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📁 2. Restrict Execution from User Download Folders

Why: Initial execution occurred from:
`C:\Users\<intern>\Downloads\SupportTool.ps1`

Mitigations:

- Block execution in Downloads, Desktop, Temp using WDAC / AppLocker
- Monitor for executions where:
  - Process.CommandLine contains `C:\Users\*\Downloads\`
  - FileCreated events appear in Downloads with _.ps1 /_ .exe / *.lnk

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🔍 3. Harden Scheduled Task Abuse

Why: Persistence was created via:
`Schtasks.exe /Create /SC ONLOGON /TN SupportToolUpdater ...`

Mitigations:

- Restrict scheduled task creation to admins
- Monitor for schtasks.exe spawning from PowerShell
- Enable Windows Event Logs for Scheduled Tasks (Operational channel)
- Alert on task names with benign-sounding names (`*Updater` , `*Support*` , etc.)

🚫 4. Prevent Registry Run Key Persistence

Why: A fallback autorun mechanism was created (Flag 14).

Mitigations:

- Monitor & block modifications to:
  - `HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run`
  - `HKLM\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run`
- Use Sysmon Event ID 13 (RegistryValueSet)
- Lock down autorun entries via GPO

🌐 5. Improve Network Egress Controls

Why: The attacker performed:

- DNS checks
- Egress validation
- An outbound exfil attempt
  - (Flag 12: unusual destination IP `100.29.147.161`)

Mitigations:

- Block outbound traffic to non-approved external IPs
- Require egress via proxy with TLS inspection
- Implement DNS filtering (block non-corp resolvers)
- Alert on:
  - PowerShell making outbound connections
  - Nslookup being used with suspicious hostnames
  - Requests to unknown external IPs

🛡 6. Enable/Improve Endpoint Security Controls

Why: Defender was tampered with (Flag 2).

Mitigations:

- Turn on Tamper Protection in Microsoft Defender
- Prevent users from stopping/reconfiguring Defender services
- Monitor for:
  - Write operations to `Set-MpPreference`
  - Unusual Defender artifacts like `DefenderTamperArtifact.txt/.lnk`

🧩 7. Block Living-off-the-Land Binaries (LOLBins)

The attacker used LOLBins such as:

- **whoami.exe**
- **ipconfig.exe**
- **qwinsta.exe / query session**
- **WMIC.exe**
- **cmd.exe /c tasklist /v**

Mitigations:

- Restrict unused LOLBins (via AppLocker/WDAC)
- Log and alert on suspicious commands:
  - `query session`
  - `wmic logicaldisk`
  - `tasklist /v`
  - `whoami /priv`

🔐 8. Least Privilege Enforcement

Why: The user was allowed to do:

- PowerShell script execution
- Create scheduled tasks
- Modify autorun entries

Mitigations:

- Remove local admin privileges
- Restrict scripting capability for interns and non-technical staff
- Apply LAPS to rotate local admin creds

📦 9. User Education & Phishing Awareness

Why: The initial malicious "support tool" masqueraded as a legitimate file.

Mitigations:

- Train users not to run unknown scripts/tools
- Warn about .ps1 files in downloads
- Highlight risks of “helpdesk tools” sent externally

🧵 10. Improve SOC Detection Logic

Create detection rules for:

Indicators of Execution

- PowerShell with `ExecutionPolicy Bypass`
- Cmd launching PowerShell
- PowerShell launching NSLookup
- Creation of `.lnk` files outside standard directories

Indicators of Persistence

- schtasks.exe creating new tasks
- Registry Run key modifications

Indicators of Exfiltration

- Outbound connections from PowerShell
- Repeated DNS lookups to untrusted domains

📁 11. File System Hardening

Why: The attacker staged artifacts in:
`C:\Users\Public\ReconArtifacts.zip`

Mitigations:

- Restrict write permissions to the Public directory
- Alert when ZIPs or archives are created unexpectedly
- Block creation of artifacts in:
  - Public
  - Temp
  - Downloads

⭐ Top 5 Quick-Win Mitigations to Implement Immediately

1. **Enable PowerShell logging + restrict script execution**

2. **Enforce WDAC / AppLocker rules on Downloads & Temp execution**
3. **Block suspicious outbound connections via DNS filtering + egress firewall**
4. **Enable Tamper Protection in Microsoft Defender**
5. **Detect + alert on Scheduled Task creation from PowerShell**