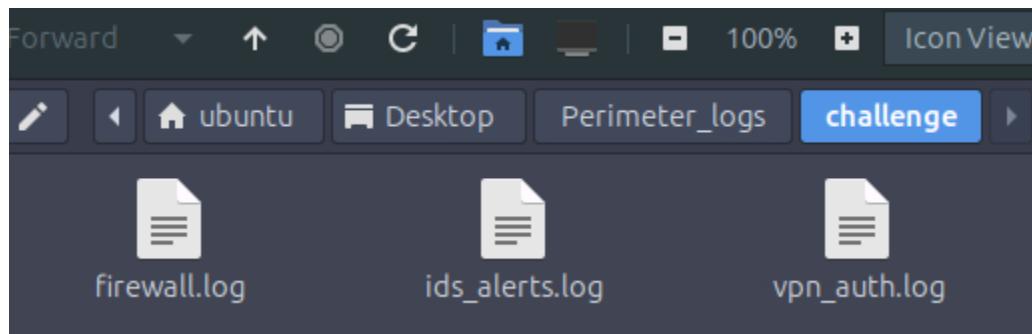


## Incident Scenario

Initech Corp, a mid-sized financial services company, has recently deployed a new firewall and intrusion detection system (IDS) to monitor its network perimeter. Over the past month, security analysts have noticed abnormal traffic patterns, but the SOC team has been overwhelmed and missed deeper analysis.

As a new security analyst, you have been tasked with reviewing one month of perimeter logs to determine what techniques the adversary used, and whether they succeeded in breaching the perimeter.

- **Firewall Logs:** `firewall.log`
- **WAF Logs:** `ids_alerts.log`
- **VPN Logs:** `vpn_auth.log`



## Network Assets

The Network of Initech Corp contains the following assets. We can use that as a reference.

IP	Hostname	Role	OS	Team	Criticality
10.0.0.20	FINANCE-SRV1	File/Finance Server (SMB)	Windows Server	Finance IT	High
10.0.0.50	VPN-GW	VPN Gateway	Linux	NetOps	Critical
10.0.0.51	APP-WEB-01	Internal Web/App	Linux	Apps Team	High
10.0.0.60	WORKSTATION-60	Employee Workstation	Windows 10	Sales	Medium
10.8.0.23	VPN-CLIENT-ATTK	VPN Assigned Client (Ephemeral)	N/A	N/A	Critical
10.0.1.10	DMZ-WEB	DMZ Web Server	Linux	NetOps	Medium

## Investigating the Logs

There are two ways to investigate the logs: manually using command-line tools or using Splunk. Instructions on how to access the Splunk instance are mentioned at the end.

### Method 1: Manual Log Analysis

```
ubuntu@tryhackme: ~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs$ cd challenge
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ ls
firewall.log  ids_alerts.log  vpn_auth.log
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ head firewall.log
2025-08-25 00:47:46 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:60317 -> 10.0.0.50:443
2025-08-25 01:29:33 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:62718 -> 10.0.0.60:443
2025-08-25 01:42:12 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:55875 -> 10.0.0.51:80
2025-08-25 03:30:47 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:63035 -> 10.0.0.20:80
2025-08-25 04:06:58 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:65458 -> 10.0.0.20:25
2025-08-25 05:51:36 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:56035 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-08-25 06:09:50 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:63418 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
2025-08-25 07:39:29 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:55955 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
2025-08-25 08:24:34 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:63475 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
2025-08-25 08:57:21 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:58636 -> 10.0.0.50:53
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

```
ubuntu@tryhackme: ~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ head ids_alerts.log
2025-08-25 00:12:53 [**] [1:2003272:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:20127 -> 10.0.0.60:22
2025-08-25 01:50:30 [**] [1:2003377:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 203.0.113.100:56603 -> 10.0.0.20:25
2025-08-25 02:16:39 [**] [1:2003437:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 203.0.113.45:62546 -> 10.0.0.20:21
2025-08-25 02:23:07 [**] [1:2003344:1] ET WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 198.51.100.45:12396 -> 10.0.0.20:22
2025-08-25 02:25:48 [**] [1:2003445:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 192.0.2.115:3952 -> 10.0.0.20:22
2025-08-25 03:35:00 [**] [1:2003160:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 203.0.113.45:38760 -> 10.0.0.51:443
2025-08-25 05:02:36 [**] [1:2003187:1] ET WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:46776 -> 10.0.0.60:3389
2025-08-25 06:04:26 [**] [1:2003179:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:20632 -> 10.0.0.50:8080
2025-08-25 14:12:11 [**] [1:2003500:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 192.0.2.115:30225 -> 10.0.0.51:445
2025-08-25 15:30:03 [**] [1:2003354:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 203.0.113.100:27572 -> 10.0.0.60:4444
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

```
ubuntu@tryhackme: ~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ head vpn_auth.log
2025-08-25 08:25:10 203.0.113.45 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.143
2025-08-25 08:27:38 203.0.113.100 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.131
2025-08-25 14:57:10 203.0.113.10 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.116
2025-08-25 23:04:53 203.0.113.10 jsmith SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.31
2025-08-26 03:36:17 198.51.100.92 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.62
2025-08-26 08:55:14 203.0.113.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.126
2025-08-26 10:02:45 198.51.100.92 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.81
2025-08-27 03:11:33 198.51.100.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.163
2025-08-28 02:52:16 192.0.2.115 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.132
2025-08-28 03:20:33 203.0.113.45 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.193
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

## Reconnaissance attempt:

Let's begin our analysis by analyzing the blocked requests in the firewall logs, as shown below:

Examining the blocked requests indicates that an external IP has been found probing against internal IPs using various ports .

```
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat firewall.log | grep "BLOCK" | head
2025-08-26 12:12:47 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.10:64292 -> 10.0.0.50:21
2025-08-27 03:18:28 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:61701 -> 10.0.0.60:23
2025-08-27 11:56:20 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.10:64952 -> 10.0.0.50:22
2025-08-27 22:52:00 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.10:63686 -> 10.0.0.20:445
2025-08-28 10:00:00 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50000 -> 10.0.0.20:4444
2025-08-28 10:00:30 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50001 -> 10.0.0.20:21
2025-08-28 10:01:00 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50002 -> 10.0.0.20:21
2025-08-28 10:01:30 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50003 -> 10.0.0.20:4444
2025-08-28 10:02:00 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50004 -> 10.0.0.20:23
2025-08-28 10:02:30 BLOCK TCP 203.0.113.45:50005 -> 10.0.0.20:22
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

I have identified a suspicious IP which we can use to pivot

```
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat firewall.log | grep "BLOCK" | cut -d' ' -f5 |
cut -d: -f1 | sort -nr | uniq -c
279 203.0.113.45
46 203.0.113.10
26 10.8.0.23
```

By now, it is confirmed that, that attacker has successfully gained the initial access and got hold on to an internal IP address. Let's filter through the firewall logs and see if we can find the footprints of any lateral movement from the compromised host IP

REDACTED.

It seems that the attacker was able to gain access to the internal network through exploitation.

```
cat firewall.log | grep [REDACTED] | grep "ALLOW"
```

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
2025-09-07 21:26:25 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:55382 -> 10.0.0.51:443
2025-09-08 01:05:51 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:62639 -> 10.0.0.20:443
2025-09-08 01:37:18 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:51856 -> 10.0.0.50:53
2025-09-08 01:41:02 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:63493 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-09-08 02:24:06 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:57555 -> 10.0.0.51:25
2025-09-08 02:32:07 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:52264 -> 10.0.0.60:80
2025-09-08 04:11:07 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:54531 -> 10.0.0.20:80
2025-09-08 05:53:07 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:59312 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-09-08 07:51:52 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:51619 -> 10.0.0.20:25
2025-09-08 08:53:27 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:50444 -> 10.0.0.20:443
2025-09-08 11:25:50 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.10:53536 -> 10.0.0.51:445
2025-09-08 11:44:58 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:58211 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-09-08 11:50:33 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:63784 -> 10.0.0.60:443
2025-09-08 13:04:17 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:56728 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
2025-09-08 13:28:29 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.45:55737 -> 10.0.0.50:21
2025-09-08 13:49:58 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:52735 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-09-08 13:54:51 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.45:58194 -> 10.0.0.20:4444
2025-09-08 14:50:36 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:63395 -> 10.0.0.20:443
2025-09-08 15:57:54 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:51543 -> 10.0.0.51:25
2025-09-08 16:10:02 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:50643 -> 10.0.0.50:53
2025-09-08 18:19:50 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:58459 -> 10.0.0.50:53
2025-09-08 19:47:37 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:56066 -> 10.0.0.20:443
2025-09-08 19:53:10 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:60578 -> 10.0.0.60:25
2025-09-08 21:05:36 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:60671 -> 10.0.0.50:25
2025-09-09 00:20:56 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:53648 -> 10.0.0.20:80
2025-09-09 01:39:53 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:50666 -> 10.0.0.50:80
2025-09-09 04:33:07 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:52734 -> 10.0.0.20:8080
2025-09-09 05:04:51 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:53514 -> 10.0.0.50:25
2025-09-09 05:28:41 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:64605 -> 10.0.0.50:25
2025-09-09 07:45:37 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:52453 -> 10.0.0.50:25
2025-09-09 08:14:18 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:62371 -> 10.0.0.20:80
2025-09-09 10:42:08 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:65382 -> 10.0.0.60:443
2025-09-09 13:33:55 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:56449 -> 10.0.0.20:8080
2025-09-09 13:41:14 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:60611 -> 10.0.0.51:443
2025-09-09 14:11:14 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.45:56761 -> 10.0.0.20:8080
2025-09-09 14:36:20 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:63914 -> 10.0.0.50:80
2025-09-09 15:16:11 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:57957 -> 10.0.0.60:443
2025-09-09 15:24:19 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:49287 -> 10.0.0.50:80
2025-09-09 16:50:51 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:57477 -> 10.0.0.50:25
2025-09-09 17:56:00 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:54250 -> 10.0.0.20:80
```

We can clearly see that the suspicious IP has multiple failed VPN login attempts.

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat vpn_auth.log | grep FAIL | cut -d' ' -f3 | so
rt -nr | uniq -c
 118 203.0.113.45
   1 203.0.113.100
   1 198.51.100.92
   1 198.51.100.45
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

the multiple login attempt was made against a certain user `svc_REDRACTED`, followed by a success login, resulting in the attacker being assigned a local IP address.

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat vpn_auth.log | grep [REDACTED]
2025-08-25 08:25:10 203.0.113.45 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.143
2025-08-25 08:27:38 203.0.113.100 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.131
2025-08-25 14:57:10 203.0.113.10 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.116
2025-08-25 23:04:53 203.0.113.10 jsmith SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.31
2025-08-26 03:36:17 198.51.100.92 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.62
2025-08-26 08:55:14 203.0.113.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.126
2025-08-26 10:02:45 198.51.100.92 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.81
2025-08-27 03:11:33 198.51.100.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.163
2025-08-28 02:52:16 192.0.2.115 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.132
2025-08-28 03:20:33 203.0.113.45 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.193
2025-08-28 04:54:52 203.0.113.45 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.104
2025-08-28 09:32:18 198.51.100.92 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.46
2025-08-28 20:29:44 198.51.100.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.85
2025-08-28 20:59:06 192.0.2.115 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.80
2025-08-29 08:11:44 198.51.100.45 jsmith FAIL
2025-08-29 21:02:21 203.0.113.45 jsmith SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.59
2025-08-30 14:46:31 203.0.113.100 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.53
2025-08-30 23:25:10 203.0.113.45 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.172
2025-08-31 00:32:09 192.0.2.115 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.72
2025-08-31 10:52:34 192.0.2.115 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.186
2025-08-31 12:25:56 192.0.2.115 svc_backup SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.20
2025-08-31 12:30:29 198.51.100.92 jsmith SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.38
2025-08-31 22:47:42 203.0.113.10 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.32
2025-09-01 01:57:06 203.0.113.45 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.89
2025-09-01 03:41:43 192.0.2.115 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.179
2025-09-01 20:04:35 198.51.100.45 alice SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.174
2025-09-02 16:34:25 203.0.113.10 jsmith SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.86
2025-09-02 20:53:42 203.0.113.10 bob SUCCESS assigned_ip=10.8.0.114
2025-09-03 02:00:00 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:00:10 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:00:20 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:00:30 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:00:40 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:00:50 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:01:00 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:01:10 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:01:20 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:01:30 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
2025-09-03 02:01:40 203.0.113.45 svc_backup FAIL
```

It is observed that, the compromised IP is probing internal machines 10.0.0.20/10.0.0.51/ 10.0.0.60 on various ports .

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat firewall.log | grep [REDACTED] | grep "ALLOW"
| head
2025-08-25 00:47:46 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:60317 -> 10.0.0.50:443
2025-08-25 01:29:33 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:62718 -> 10.0.0.60:443
2025-08-25 01:42:12 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:55875 -> 10.0.0.51:80
2025-08-25 03:30:47 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:63035 -> 10.0.0.20:80
2025-08-25 04:06:58 ALLOW TCP 192.0.2.115:65458 -> 10.0.0.20:25
2025-08-25 05:51:36 ALLOW TCP 203.0.113.100:56035 -> 10.0.0.20:53
2025-08-25 06:09:50 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:63418 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
2025-08-25 07:39:29 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.77:55955 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
2025-08-25 08:24:34 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:63475 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
2025-08-25 08:57:21 ALLOW TCP 198.51.100.92:58636 -> 10.0.0.50:53
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

It seems, the compromised host is trying to exploit various vulnerabilities against the services mentioned above on those hosts. One of the IDS alerts indicates SMB exploit, which look interesting.

```
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep [REDACTED] | head
2025-08-25 00:12:53 [**] [1:2003272:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:20127 -> 10.0.0.60:22
2025-08-25 01:50:30 [**] [1:2003377:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 203.0.113.100:56603 -> 10.0.0.20:25
2025-08-25 02:16:39 [**] [1:2003437:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 203.0.113.45:62546 -> 10.0.0.20:21
2025-08-25 02:23:07 [**] [1:2003344:1] ET WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 198.51.100.45:12396 -> 10.0.0.20:22
2025-08-25 02:25:48 [**] [1:2003445:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 192.0.2.115:3952 -> 10.0.0.20:22
2025-08-25 03:35:00 [**] [1:2003160:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 203.0.113.45:38760 -> 10.0.0.51:443
2025-08-25 05:02:36 [**] [1:2003187:1] ET WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:46776 -> 10.0.0.60:3389
2025-08-25 06:04:26 [**] [1:2003179:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 198.51.100.92:20632 -> 10.0.0.50:8080
2025-08-25 14:12:11 [**] [1:2003500:1] ET INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 192.0.2.115:30225 -> 10.0.0.51:445
2025-08-25 15:30:03 [**] [1:2003354:1] ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification: Suspicious Activity] [Priority: 3] {TCP} 203.0.113.100:27572 -> 10.0.0.60:4444
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

The results confirm that, the compromised host was able to exploit SMB service and was able to achieve lateral movement.

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep -n [REDACTED] | grep 'SMB' | cut -d' ' -f6,7,8,9,10,19,21 | head
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2001 10.0.0.51:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2006 10.0.0.20:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2010 10.0.0.60:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2016 10.0.0.60:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2018 10.0.0.20:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2020 10.0.0.60:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2021 10.0.0.51:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2027 10.0.0.60:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2033 10.0.0.20:445
EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement 10.8.0.23:2035 10.0.0.20:445
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$
```

It clearly confirms our suspicion against one of the internal compromised host.

```
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep C2 | head
2025-09-11 01:00:00 [**] [1:2001000:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30000 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-11 07:00:00 [**] [1:2001001:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30001 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-11 13:00:00 [**] [1:2001002:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30002 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-11 19:00:00 [**] [1:2001003:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30003 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-12 01:00:00 [**] [1:2001004:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30004 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-12 07:00:00 [**] [1:2001005:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30005 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-12 13:00:00 [**] [1:2001006:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30006 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-12 19:00:00 [**] [1:2001007:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30007 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-13 01:00:00 [**] [1:2001008:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30008 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-13 07:00:00 [**] [1:2001009:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30009 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
```

analysis clearly indicates that our internal network is fully compromised, and we now have the external IP address acting as a C2 server, receiving the C2 beacons from our compromised host.

```
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep -n [REDACTED] | cut -d' ' -f6,7,8,9,10,19,22,23 | head -n 15
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.20:21
WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] 10.0.0.20:22
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.51:443
WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] 10.0.0.60:3389
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.50:8080
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.51:445
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection [**] 10.0.0.20:4444
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.20:25
INFO Possible Benign Scan [**] 10.0.0.50:22
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep -n [REDACTED] | cut -d' ' -f6,7,8,9,10,19,22,23 | uniq -c | sort -nr | head
8 TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] {TCP} 198.51.100.77:4444
5 POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
4 SCAN Possible SSH Scan [**] ->
4 POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
3 SCAN Possible Portscan [**] [Classification: 10.0.0.20:4444
3 SCAN Possible Portscan [**] [Classification: 10.0.0.20:4444
3 SCAN Possible Portscan [**] [Classification: 10.0.0.20:22
3 SCAN Possible Portscan [**] [Classification: 10.0.0.20:21
3 POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
3 POLICY Suspicious HTTP [**] [Classification:
ubuntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ █
```

The output clearly shows, the compromised host REDACTED is sending extensive amount of traffic on external IP address. We can also filter on IDS logs, to see the alerts being triggered on these activities from the internal IP.

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help
198.51.100.92:65086 -> 10.0.0.50:53
198.51.100.92:65382 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
203.0.113.100:49233 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:49241 -> 10.0.0.51:443
203.0.113.100:49419 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:49470 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:49499 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:49754 -> 10.0.0.60:443
203.0.113.100:49792 -> 10.0.0.60:8080
203.0.113.100:49814 -> 10.0.0.51:53
203.0.113.100:49930 -> 10.0.0.20:443
203.0.113.100:50191 -> 10.0.0.51:25
203.0.113.100:50221 -> 10.0.0.60:53
203.0.113.100:50224 -> 10.0.0.60:53
203.0.113.100:50354 -> 10.0.0.51:25
203.0.113.100:50528 -> 10.0.0.50:80
203.0.113.100:50910 -> 10.0.0.20:25
203.0.113.100:50923 -> 10.0.0.51:25
203.0.113.100:50930 -> 10.0.0.51:53
203.0.113.100:50955 -> 10.0.0.20:25
203.0.113.100:50992 -> 10.0.0.51:53
203.0.113.100:51227 -> 10.0.0.60:80
203.0.113.100:51242 -> 10.0.0.20:80
203.0.113.100:51353 -> 10.0.0.60:53
203.0.113.100:51543 -> 10.0.0.51:25
203.0.113.100:51568 -> 10.0.0.60:25
203.0.113.100:51753 -> 10.0.0.60:25
203.0.113.100:51838 -> 10.0.0.20:443
203.0.113.100:52084 -> 10.0.0.50:53
203.0.113.100:52087 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:52324 -> 10.0.0.50:443
203.0.113.100:52407 -> 10.0.0.50:53
203.0.113.100:52513 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:52533 -> 10.0.0.20:80
203.0.113.100:52640 -> 10.0.0.20:8080
203.0.113.100:52657 -> 10.0.0.50:25
203.0.113.100:52869 -> 10.0.0.20:443
203.0.113.100:52975 -> 10.0.0.51:25
203.0.113.100:53045 -> 10.0.0.51:8080
203.0.113.100:53189 -> 10.0.0.20:8080
```

```
buntu@tryhackme:~/Desktop/Perimeter_logs/challenge$ cat ids_alerts.log | grep [REDACTED] | tail
2025-09-28 19:00:00 [**] [1:2001071:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30071 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-28 19:00:00 [**] [1:2002059:1] ET INFO Possible HTTP POST Large Upload [**] [Classification: P
otential Data Exfiltration] [Priority: 2] {TCP} 10.0.0.51:40059 -> 198.51.100.77:8080
2025-09-29 01:00:00 [**] [1:2001072:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30072 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-29 07:00:00 [**] [1:2001073:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30073 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-29 13:00:00 [**] [1:2001074:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30074 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-29 19:00:00 [**] [1:2001075:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30075 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-30 01:00:00 [**] [1:2001076:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30076 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-30 07:00:00 [**] [1:2001077:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30077 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-30 13:00:00 [**] [1:2001078:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30078 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
2025-09-30 19:00:00 [**] [1:2001079:1] ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconing [**] [Classification: A network
Trojan was detected] [Priority: 1] {TCP} 10.0.0.60:30079 -> 198.51.100.77:4444
```

## Method 2: Analyzing Logs via Splunk

The screenshot shows the Splunk web interface for searching the "network\_logs" index. The search bar at the top contains the query "index='network\_logs'". The results section displays 2,485 events found before 12/19/25 8:40:52.000 AM. A timeline visualization shows event distribution over time. Below the timeline, a table lists the top three sourcetypes: "firewall\_logs" (1,284 events, 51.67%), "ids\_logs" (983 events, 39.557%), and "vpn\_logs" (218 events, 8.773%). A detailed view of an event from "ids\_logs" on 9/26/25 at 3:00:00.000 AM is shown, with fields like timestamp, alert, classification, priority, protocol, source IP, destination IP, port, and sid. The event details include a JSON object with fields such as "timestamp", "alert", "classification", "priority", "protocol", "src\_ip", "src\_port", "dst\_ip", "dst\_port", and "sid". The event is identified as an "ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconsing" with a classification of "A network Trojan was detected".

This screenshot provides a detailed view of the log event from the previous screenshot. The event is timestamped at 2025-09-26 19:00:00 and is categorized under "ids\_logs". It is an "ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconsing" alert, classified as "A network Trojan was detected". The event details include:

```
        "timestamp": "2025-09-26 19:00:00",
        "alert": "ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beaconsing",
        "classification": "A network Trojan was detected",
        "priority": 1,
        "protocol": "TCP",
        "src_ip": "10.0.0.60",
        "src_port": 30063,
        "dst_ip": "198.51.100.77",
        "dst_port": 4444,
        "sid": 2001063
```

Below the event details, there are links to "Show syntax highlighted" and "Collapse" the event view. The bottom of the screen shows the host as "perimeter\_logs", source as "ids\_alerts.json", and sourcetype as "ids\_logs".

```

> 9/26/25      { [-]
 3:00:00.000 AM    alert: ET INFO Possible HTTP POST Large Upload
                    bytes: 1898575
                    classification: Potential Data Exfiltration
                    dst_ip: 198.51.100.77
                    dst_port: 8080
                    priority: 2
                    protocol: TCP
                    sid: 2002049
                    src_ip: 10.0.0.51
                    src_port: 40049
                    timestamp: 2025-09-27 03:00:00
}
Show as raw text
host = perimeter_logs | source = ids_alerts.json | sourcetype = ids_logs

```

Events (2,485) Patterns Statistics Visualization

Timeline format ▾ — Zoom Out

**alert**

10 Values, 39.557% of events Selected Yes No

**Reports**

Top values Top values by time Rare values

Events with this field

**Top 10 Values**

	Count	%
ET INFO Possible Benign Scan	181	18.413%
ET WEB_SERVER Possible SQL Injection	167	16.989%
ET POLICY Suspicious HTTP	165	16.785%
ET POLICY VPN Authentication Failure	120	12.208%
ET SCAN Possible Portscan	120	12.208%
ET TROJAN Possible C2 Beacons	80	8.138%
ET INFO Possible HTTP POST Large Upload	60	6.104%
ET EXPLOIT Possible MS-SMB Lateral Movement	32	3.255%
ET SCAN Possible SSH Scan	30	3.052%
ET EXPLOIT Possible RDP Brute Force	28	2.848%

host = perimeter\_logs | source = ids\_alerts.json | sourcetype = ids\_logs

> 9/26/25 {
 3:00:00.000 AM "timestamp": "2025-09-26 23:00:00",
 "alert": "ET INFO Possible HTTP POST Large Upload",
 "classification": "Potential Data Exfiltration",
 "priority": 2,
 "protocol": "TCP",
 "src\_ip": "10.0.0.51"
}

## **Answer the questions :**

- Examine the firewall logs. What external IP performed the most reconnaissance?

**The answer:203.0.113.45**

- In the firewall log, Which internal host was targeted by scans?

**The answer:10.0.0.20**

- Which username was targeted in VPN logs?

**The answer:svc\_backup**

- What internal IP was assigned after successful VPN login?

**The answer:10.8.0.23**

- Which port was used for lateral SMB attempts?

**The answer:445**

- In the IDS logs, which host beaconed to the C2?

**The answer:10.0.0.60**

- During the investigation, which IP was observed to be associated with C2?

**The answer:198.51.100.77**

- Which host showed the exfiltration attempts?

**The answer:10.0.0.51**