

### Introduction

This is about a subculture of Hawaiian island women with a relationship with military men. This report is focused on a dear friend of mine. I named her Mia in this report. She had a real interesting turn around “type” of relationship than any other military involved relationship that I have learned about. Most of the women in my fieldwork project all agreed on what Mia has stated to me. They all had the same things to say about their relationship with someone from the military opposed to a local relationship that they had previously been in. Therefore I choose Mia as my main informant and also listed some of the other informants information in my case report. What makes Mia’s case most interesting is that she really had a tough relationship/marriage previously with a local islander. She was not only faced with a marriage that went bad due to her spouses drug habit, but also she lost her mother and her home, all in the same year. Mia went straight to the bottom of a very dark pit and eventually was swept up by a military prince in shining armor. Unlike any other relationship with an islander, Mia and the other women all state that indeed this is a new form of life for them, one that has lifted their spirits again.

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Mia was in her forties and faced with many challenges. She just lost her husband, mother, and home in the island and desperately needed to do something. Feeling down in the dumps, Mia started to work on the military base in Kaneohe Marine Base. There she found happiness again. Being around fun people with no real rooted problems to the island, brought her joy again. Although Mia is very locally rooted and has been involved in many local events across the islands, Mia was real interested in the men from away. Men from the military with no real connections to the islands.

After working at the "E" club at Kaneohe Marine Base, Mia started to go out at night and meet up with friends that were involved in military relationships. Some of the women eventually got really close with Mia. She called them sisters, and they considered her a sister too. Mia was beginning to make a turn around in herself and began feeling really good about herself again. She says her new sisters have really lifted her away from all the awful memories within the islands. They were there whenever she needed them and they were real caring too. Mia says even though they are local friends, they are different. They are involved with someone from the military, and something about them, just brings sunshine and a sense of happiness.

Working at the "E" club on the base, brought Mia close to many military men. Eventually Mia started to date one of her customers at the "E" club. Her "new family" of friends says that the military men are real caring and loving. Most of these local women are involved with men from the military also. They say that they could never have been happier in their lives, and that they believe no local relationship could ever make them happier. Mia started to find out what they meant. She began dating one of her regular customer from the "E" club that was extra kind to her. Mia states this was a brand new kind of relationship. It was like a fresh start in the island again. Being on the base kept her away from her connected past and brought her happiness to her connected future. Still in the islands close to family and friends, Mia was full of happiness again.

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Mia relationship with Mark was great. Of course all new relationships are great at first, but Mia states that this relationship was much different, it was much more secure. Mia also says that Mark is a real gentleman. She was unfamiliar with such a gentlemen. Mia states that this relationship with Mark was much more different than any other relationship she has had with an islanders. Island men were much more laid back and depended more on their women. Being with Mark from the military was like being swept up by a prince with real manners and always on his toes for her. Mark would take the time out to make sure Mia's evenings were always rewarding. Not only with his pleasant ways, but also making sure she had a fine tip from him and others at work, making her evening therefore most worthwhile. Mia says its nice to be in the islands at home and to be treated like someone real special. Mia could now afford her own place again and have extra spending funds for fun. Other women that I have spoke with also stated that their men are real gentlemen also. Unlike the relationships that they've had, they are able to feel free again in the islands and not bounded to a warden, as they would put it. Mia especially felt this way too. All of them have stated, "its like starting fresh again", perhaps with someone unfamiliar with there history or tied through other relations from the islands. One of my former tenants also in her forties, Sheila, also agreed on the security military men had to offer opposed to local men from the islands.

Mia and Mark started dating and life was really great. Mark would make sure that Mia was financial set from month to month. Mia was able to enjoy life again. She states its like going back in time and beginning a fresh new start. Mark also was able to share his benefits with Mia. Something she was unfamiliar with. Mark would take Mia shopping at the PX and commissary. Mia states "wow" what savings this has been, it's a real break. The real break was when Mark was able to provide housing for both them. That was really incredible. Mia says that now she doesn't have to spend all her earning toward rent and is now able to enjoy some of her hard earned earnings. Some of the other local girls are just as fortunate too. They say, its hard to

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survive even if your not the only one working. Having a rent break has really given them the opportunity to enjoy their lives again.

Eventually it just can't be all that good some say. The day comes when you are faced with a loved one needing to be deployed. This is a challenging emotional roller coaster all together they say. The first deployment is such a shock. You know its coming but your really don't realize it until there gone. Then the tears and emptiness sets in. Soon you find others, other local girls in the same boat. You learn to help one another through it and before you know it they are back. The second deployment is much easier to take. You are familiar with the procedures and filled with the belief that they will be home soon. Its when your love one is deployed for almost a year. In in the middle of a war. Your proud of them, Mia says. Fighting for our country, you just try to go on and keep extra busy. Looking forward to their emails. Sending them love in care packages and waiting for the day for their return.

Fortunately life has become much more secure now, although the security of there return is uncertain. As the time passes each day, Mia and the others say all they can do is keep themselves busy. The challenges aren't easy, but with team effort and support of others going through the same, it makes life much easier to deal with. Thank goodness for the support, Mia says. If it weren't for the support from others, I would feel like I did when I lost my husband, mother, and home last year. As I spoke with Sheila, my former tenant, she states the same. Getting together with others who are going through deployment helps her too. Keeping busy is the key to passing the days as they await their loved ones return. Preparing for the bright future, making long term decisions, and praying for their dreams to come true upon the men they love to return home soon.

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#### About the Author

My name is Susan and I have been very close to a dear friend who has not had much luck with her love life. Recently she has met a new man in her life that is totally different than any other man who she has dated. I also learned a lot about her new kind of relationship that I was unfamiliar with. An island women with a relationship with someone from the military. I also learned a lot about other local girls that had a previous relationship with local men, and now with

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someone from the military. One of these local girls were my former tenants and some of them I had met through my friend Mia. Sheila who was a former tenant of mine, also had a local relationship, and now was with someone from the military. Sheila was also in her early forties like Mia and agrees with Mia throughout my interviews. Being that all of us girls were very locally rooted and only knew local men, this new kind of relationship that these local girls are in, are completely unknown grounds for them and my knowledge. I found it very interesting that Mia has found such peace and happiness with someone who is not physically here with her. Therefore I did some informal interviews with Mia and some of her local friends that also have a relationship with someone from the military. I also did an informal interview with a former tenant of mine, Sheila. All of these women agree and feel the new change of life is much better and brighter that they have ever known. I have mainly done some informal interviews with Mia and wrote about her life with Mark. This is a type of life history from Mia and Mark mainly and about Mia's last year and a half relationship with Mark who is in the military and how her life had changed.