



# **Chuckling It All: How Downshifting to a Windswept Scottish Island Did Nothing to Improve My Quality of Life (Maverick Lifestyles)**

*Max Scratchmann*

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Named one of the twelve best travel books of 2009 by Worldhum, Chuckling It All exposes the gritty reality behind all those twee bestsellers which extol the joys of sunny rural idylls. With its remorseless true-life account of downshifting to a remote Scottish island, Chuckling It All uncovers the frightening realities of relocating to “a magical island lost in the mists of time” as you follow the warts-and-all adventures of urban misanthrope, Max Scratchmann, as he valiantly tries to forge a new life in the windswept Orkney islands, and grumbles his way through unending winters with eighteen-hour nights, nocturnal visits from drunken farmers and booty calls from desperate divorcees. From struggling to fit in as a temporary postman in a wilderness where houses don’t display numbers or names, to attending drunken country ceilidhs with the island singles’ club, or finding himself up to the neck in local politics while performing in the village pantomime, Chuckling It All is an urbanite’s nightmare and one of the most hilarious books that you will read this year. Irreverent, sarcastic and biting caustic, Chuckling It All still manages to be a grudgingly affectionate portrait of rural life through the eyes of a cynical outsider, and is one of the truest accounts of “living the dream” ever published. “Does for downshifting what Lewinsky did for Clinton – only much funnier...”

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