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The artist Lee Lozano (1930--1999) began her career as a painter; her work rapidly evolved from figuration to abstraction. In the late 1960s, she created a major series of eleven monochromatic Wave paintings, her last in the medium. Despite her achievements as a painter, Lozano is best known for two acts of refusal, both of which she undertook as artworks: Untitled (General Strike Piece), begun in 1969, in which she cut herself off from the commercial art world for a time; and the so-called Boycott Piece, which began in 1971 as a month-long experiment intended to improve communication but became a permanent hiatus from speaking to or directly interacting with women. In this book, Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer examines Lozano's Dropout Piece, the culmination of her practice, her greatest experiment in art and endurance, encompassing all her withdrawals, and ending only with her burial in an unmarked grave.

And yet, although Dropout Piece is among Lozano's most important works, it might not exist at all. There is no conventional artwork to be exhibited, no performance event to be documented. Lehrer-Graiwer views Dropout Piece as leveraging the artist's entire practice and embodying her creative intelligence, her radicality, and her intensity. Combining art history, analytical inquiry, and journalistic investigation, Lehrer-Graiwer examines not only Lozano's act of dropping out but also the evolution over time of Dropout Piece in the context of the artist's practice in New York and her subsequent life in Dallas.