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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Making a Clandestine Match in Early Modern English Literature -- 1. Reforming Clandestine Marriage in Spenser's Faerie Queene, Book I -- 2. "Wanton Loves and Young Desires": Marlowe's Hero and Leander and Chapman's Continuation -- 3. Sacred Ceremonies and Private Contracts in Spenser's Epithalamion and Shakespeare's A Lover's Complaint -- 4. "Lorenzo and His Infidel": Elopement and the Cross-Cultural Household in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice -- 5. "Are You Fast Married?": Elopement and Turning Turk in Shakespeare's Othello -- Conclusion Incestuous Clandestine Marriage in John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Katharine Cleland's Irregular Unions provides the first sustained literary history of clandestine marriage in early modern England and reveals its controversial nature in the wake of the Elizabethan Religious Settlement, which standardized the marriage ritual for the first time. Cleland examines many examples of clandestine marriage across

genres. Discussing such classic works as *The Faerie Queene*, *Othello*, and *Merchant of Venice*, she argues that early modern authors use clandestine marriage to explore the intersection between the self and the marriage ritual in post-Reformation England. The ways in which authors grapple with the political and social complexities of clandestine marriage, she finds, suggest that these narratives were far more than interesting plot devices or scandalous stories ripped from the headlines. Instead, after the Reformation, fictions of clandestine marriage allowed early modern authors to explore topics of identity formation in new and different ways.
