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Nota di contenuto	Slavery and the Constitution -- The Missouri equilibrium -- The compromise of 1850 -- But we have no country -- A traitorous combination -- Prosecution at Independence Hall -- Sir-did you hear it? -- Athens of America -- Kidnapping again! -- The height of cruelty -- Judge Loring's predicament -- Freedom on the Western reserve -- The son betrays and the father indicts -- Votaries of the higher law -- An irrepressible conflict.
Sommario/riassunto	In this book, Steven Lubet examines, in detail, three trials on the great issue of fugitive slaves in the 1850's, the fugitive slave statutes, and how the legal system coped or failed to cope with the apparent inconsistencies between the Constitution supporting slavery and its purpose of guaranteeing certain rights to every man. The first case occurred in 1851 when a white Pennsylvania miller named Caster Hanway faced treason charges based on his participation in the Christiana slave riot. The second trial was of Anthony Burns in Boston, and the third case arose out of the 1858 capture of John Price by Kentucky slavehunters in the abolitionist stronghold of Oberlin, Ohio. The fugitive slave trials also provide modern readers with uncomfortable insights into the nature of slavery itself. With sincere conviction, many northern judges – including some who claimed to

oppose slavery – calmly considered the quantum of evidence necessary to turn a human being into property. This book powerfully illuminates the tremendous bravery of the fugitives, the moral courage of their rescuers and lawyers, and, alas, the failure of American legal and political institutions to come to grips with slavery short of civil war.

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