Erica Kalberer: Critical Conversation Draft Feedback

I think that this draft is someone missing the point of the critical conversation exercise and could use a bit of development. More specifically, I think that you're confusing argumentative and evidence sources (on the BEAM model), and, as such, not doing the basic job of literary analysis: coming up with your own argument. Here are some of the problem areas:

1) The first and most important issue here is that I don't see any close readings used to provide evidence of your claims (E on the BEAM model). I do see quotations, but these are used to illustrate others' ideas, rather than build toward your own unique perspective or conclusions. You don't actually need to provide support for Kermode or Brown. Just summarize and cite them. Let them do their own work.

2) This leads to a different problem. In the absence of your own argument, you're forcing yourself to use Brown and Kermode as evidence. Specifically, after outlining their respective arguments you then compare them directly and draw your conclusions from *their* work. Remember: we don't build arguments that way when analyzing a piece of literature. Instead, we use close reading to establish our own argument, and then explain how that argument compares to, builds on, or qualifies the findings of others (A in the BEAM model).

3) So the biggest issue here is a lack of close reading and analysis that builds to your own ideas. However, another major issue is at stake here: you're not reporting these critical sources adequately. Specifically, you're attributing a pretty watered-down argument to Paul Brown, who actually explains how, by "othering" (for want of a better word) Caliban, Prospero is actually opening up the possibility that his own rule is threatened, and is thus doing a self-defeating thing.