Othello Quiz 5 — ACT FIVE

Othello:

> *It is the **cause**, it is the **cause**, my soul.*
> *Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars.*
> *It is the **cause**. Yet I'll not shed her blood,*
> *Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,*
> *And smooth as monumental alabaster.*
> *Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.*

What does Othello mean by "the cause," and why does he repeat the phrase? To answer, follow:

a. Contextualize the passage: what is happening in the play? Who is speaking, under what circumstances? What is he talking about? Check the surrounding lines to make sure. (1 line)
b. Interpret the passage and answer the question with respect to the quoted passage. Pay attention to the wording in the text and to the wording in the question. Why does he *repeat* "the cause"? What is the *argument* of the speech? When does Othello say "Yet"? Hint: There are two opposing ideas here (thesis/antithesis). (2-3 lines)
c. Find another passage in the play that corroborates your interpretation. In this case, refer to 4.1.216-217 (Folger) or 4.1.192-193 (Arden). Does this passage support your interpretation? How? If not, find another that you believe fits best. Copy the quote (1-2 lines at the most) and comment.
d. Conclude: How do these two pieces of *textual evidence* corroborate your interpretation? (1-2 lines)