5.3.3. Voice – play, dream – drama

Listen to one of the radio programmes below, or any others produced since. All of these were (and many still are) produced and broadcast by BBC Radio 4. They are freely available online at:

www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/programmes/genres/drama/current (here accessed 2.11.2011)

‘Afternoon Reading’
‘Afternoon Play’
‘Book at Bedtime’
‘Book of the Week’
‘Classic Serial’
‘Friday Play’
‘Saturday Play’
‘Women’s Hour Drama’

Tips on listening to and thinking about these plays and stories:

○ How does your experience of listening to a play or story differ from your experience of watching or reading such a work?
○ Some of these works of literature were originally written as radio plays, while others have been adapted from printed novels.
○ Some employ dramatic effects such as sound effects and music.
○ Some employ narrating personas while others rely entirely on dialogue.
○ How do these factors affect your experience and interpretation of the work?

Go on to compare your chosen play with the voices, sound-effects, strategies and structures of an early classic – and poetic – piece of radio drama such as Dylan Thomas’s Under Milk Wood (see 5.3.3). If possible, also listen to a recording of the latter as first narrated by Richard Burton for radio in 1954. It is available as a BBC Radio audiobook and part of it may perhaps still be heard on YouTube or a similar internet site.