

A Fairy Tale Grips Its Audience



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Mrs. Jens Otto Krag, wife of Danish Premier, reads to children at Hans Christian Andersen statue in Central Park.

Fifty fidgeting members of the fairy-tale set listened enraptured yesterday as the wife of Denmark's Premier Jens Otto Krag read "The Princess and the Pea" at the Hans Christian Andersen Storytelling Center in Central Park.

The occasion was the opening of the season at the center. Two hundred adults also were on hand, standing or sitting in front of the Andersen Memorial on the west bank of the Conservatory Lake at 72d Street in Central Park, near Fifth Avenue.

A faint breeze floated through the trees newly turned green as the storyteller, Helen Virkner Krag, stage and screen actress, read

the fairy tale in English and Danish. She stood in front of a bronze statue of Andersen, on which some of the children sat.

The youngsters were quietly attentive through the reading—even the Danish version—but bolted from their seats to climb all over their favorite statue the moment the story ended. They tugged at its monumental nose, held on to protruding lapels, and curls, and crawled from one knee to the other.

Newbold Morris, Commissioner of Parks, officiated at the opening ceremony. Music was provided by "Mik," a folkloric choir from Greenland with 22 members, dressed in seal-skin and bear-skin costumes.