

**Actively Closing the Gap Between Ages and Stages**  
**By Shirley M. Jackson**  
**Los Angeles #2 Joint Territory**

*Our lives are filled with ages and stages  
that keep us apart  
from other faces and places in our own hearts —  
That prevent us from enjoying the opportunity  
to invest our souls  
and our hearts  
in the community  
where we live,  
where we work.*

*Dare we shirk from our task  
to rein in society's injustice —  
Exerting ourselves  
to expose its ugly mask?  
Do we move forward  
with faith that is fresh?  
Closing the gap between others  
and our true selves without fear....  
Come, let's work together —  
the next millennium is near!*

*Let our shoulders bear the axle  
that bridges the gap  
between apathy and action,  
between theory and result  
and anything!  
Or everything that keeps us apart!  
Approach us all our neighbor, saying:  
"Come! Let's pray together.  
I promise you  
I'll strive for changes in my heart....  
I'll look with all my might  
To see your value  
To see your worth  
To see the efforts that you make."  
We'll approach Century 2000  
knowing  
we did all we could — together  
for the future!  
for humankind!  
for our children!  
for their sake!*

*Our efforts will be engraved  
in their lives.  
They'll advance brave and strong!*

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*Because we strove today  
to make right  
what is wrong.  
To actively close the gap  
between ages and stages  
and faces and races.  
So! If what you see and hear today  
moves your life in any way  
to take action  
to remove the suffering of another,  
we can boldly claim our victory!  
That today — each of us will  
say to ourselves:  
“I can make a difference!  
I have a stake in history!”*

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