

Me and Helena? We're the same age, you know

Girls, just take a look around at all your stunning celeb twins, says Sharon Wright. They're living proof that it's not too late for you to be slim, brown and certifiably gorgeous, too

What is this I see before my eyes? Helena Christensen is nearly 38? Yess! I am 38. She is gorgeous and glamorous. Therefore, it is not too late for me to be gorgeous and glamorous. Except it is, of course, by every measure you care to employ. We might have been born in the same year, but were we actually on the same planet? I don't care - I *love* this. I am perked up beyond reason by the birthdays game. Were you to ask, I could reel off the likes of Kylie Minogue, Lucy Liu and Debra Messing as fellow 68ers. When Susan from *Desperate Housewives* said she was 38, I almost did a back flip off the sofa.

It's not just me, you know. Any woman can give you her celeb twins. As self-delusion goes, it's really very soothing. When I've spent the day herding small children and Waitrose carrier bags down the street wearing an ensemble of ancient fleece and orthopaedic trainers, I clutch at my celeb twins like a drowning frump. In my head, I'm able to bracket myself with them and their youthful looks, flat stomachs and ability to wear city shorts. They give me hope and make me feel good simply because... *they are my age*.

Of course, it's a fabulously shallow pastime because the twin thing basically boils down to looks. Being the same age as a perfectly ordinary-looking Nobel Prize winner just isn't the same. After all, it's not like you can pretend you're also on the brink of some discovery that will alleviate the suffering of mankind. No, you'd definitely have to have started all that thankless spadework by now. But with looks and lifestyle, you can convince yourself your prime isn't

drifting down the Swanee just yet. Not with all the evidence right there in front of your grateful eyes on the red carpet.

This kind of twin tonic proved vital recently when two of my friends baulked in the face of their imminent 40th birthdays. 'Come on, Liz Hurley and Halle Berry have the same number of candles as you,' I said, bracingly, 'and you don't see them reaching for the bedjackets and Werther's Originals just yet, do you?'

The twin-win situation is naturally fuelled by favourite telly shows that are 'talkin' 'bout my generation' in a spectacularly unrealistic way. There's a reason why we can't shut up about *Desperate Housewives* in the same way we couldn't stop talking about *Sex And The City*. Our celeb twins look gorgeous. No one on *Wisteria Lane* is frantically examining her upper lip for signs of a moustache after learning what the word 'perimenopausal' means. They haven't given up on glam. They don't look past it. They look bloody fantastic.

My all-time top twin is Carrie Bradshaw. Remember the episode in which she was mulling over, in her beautiful boho-chic way, whether she should stay with Aleksandr or leave him to have a baby - what with her being 38 and all? Well, I do. Even the title of the episode - 'Catch 38' - was enough to have me suddenly sitting bolt upright like a Jack Russell

'Our celeb twins haven't given up on glam. They don't look past it - they look fantastic'

that's spotted a ferret. There she was, pushing 40, enveloped in thrilling threads with great hair, pondering, y'know, the really big stuff. (Funny how I only picked up on this on the rerun when our ages coincided.)

Of course, attempting to copy slavishly your celeb sister's look can be dangerous. You have to factor in a soupçon of reality. SJP looks cute and kooky in vintage ensembles; I look like someone should be chasing after me with a butterfly net. The only real thing we have in common, looks-wise, is our bouncy gait - but while hers is a consequence of her tippy Manolo toes, mine's more fallout from blown-out Birkenstock sandals.

But I'm determined to keep up with my celeb sisters. So what if they never write, never phone? Just seeing someone who's exactly the same age as me out and about looking amazing is very motivating. For a few happy minutes.

I'm thinking, 'Yes! I'm going to make more of an effort. It's not over till it's over.' This determination often lasts as far as retrieving the leftover pizza from the fridge, whole minutes after the credits roll.

But my celeb twins will still be motivatingly gorgeous tomorrow, and tomorrow is another day. Whatever annoying teeny-tiny details like, say, my entire reflection might suggest, I'm not a lost cause. Just ask Helena, Lucy and Kylie. ☐

Twins: Sharon and Helena. Sharon's the one on the left

