

my brother's driveway and being greeted at the front door by my excited nieces and nephews. I imagine the excitement in my sister-in-law's face as she pats my belly and welcomes me home. At 37 weeks into my pregnancy, I will for the first time experience what it's like to share my excitement and my fears about parenthood with someone else. Someone who gets it. Someone who gets *me*. After sitting through pre-natal classes as the only woman there without a "support person" present, and sharing my complicated emotion-laden tears at the first images of my unborn child with nobody but the cool, distant ultrasound technician, I desperately longed for this. No more e-mails signed off with "xoxo", no more lame emoticon shorthand for real emotional experiences—now I get real hugs, real kisses, real laughs and frowns and tears and joys. No more aloneness. For the first time since becoming pregnant—maybe even for the first time in years—I am no longer alone.

*Home is! Where: the heart is.*

For me, in this moment, home is not a place, not a location. It is a feeling that is built from connection, love, history, shared pasts and intertwined futures. It is social. It is comfort. It is family. If it takes a village to raise a child, my village is Regina—not because it's where I grew up, but because it's where the people who raised me still live. No matter where life has taken me, or where it will lead me in future, these people always have been—and always will be—my home. Even if that home does not include my child's father.

There is no substitute for home.