

Emily Wall

Juneau Framed

When we first come, we hang
Juneau on our freshly painted walls—

maybe first in the living room,
where we show her off to visiting relatives,

then maybe in the kitchen, so we can
taste her while we cook,

then later in the bedroom, where we
dream of her, a clear February day

a dust of snow on everything,
a seiner coming home to Harris Harbor—

and soon she is only in our dreams,
a Juneau we remember, as we let our lives

absorb her—a string of new condos
in Lemon Creek, plans for a road

that will connect her to everywhere,
a Walmart in the wetlands.

Soon she becomes an image we see only
when a certain bluegrass song comes on,

the memory of someone we once loved,
long ago, in the back of a car, on the beach,

and what we remember is not who she was,
but the intensity of our love, the taste of that new desire

on our tongues, the feel of possibility
against our searching fingers.