

svínafellsjökull

I least expected
solitude
in a place
widely visited

the lagoon
welcomes me
into its cathedral space

I sit still
so quiet
I can hear
the ice shifting
under the autumn sun

what journey has it made
moving as one
down the mountain
for centuries
towards the sea

what debris collected
along the way
traces of volcanic ash
evidence past eruptions

rocks and sand
even human possessions
are swallowed whole
only to be discarded
later down the line

at the tongue of the glacier
the ice breaks up
released to make
its final journey
as we all must do

this ice is on a trajectory
there's no going back
it appears to
accept its fate
with grace and dignity

years may pass
before it finally melts
the wind and the tide
blow and buffer it
back towards home

the cold offers reprieve
melted ice re-forms
to live another day

but eventually the sea
will consume it
the gatherer
will become
the gathered

I ponder how all of us
must one day
share this fate
will we leave any mark
or simply vanish
without trace

I think of the people
gone before me
how I carry echoes of them
like layers of ash
debris I've collected
and cannot discard

surely we're all part
of the same story
everything returning
to the earth
in one form
or another

as a younger woman
I considered legacy
but no more
it feels enough
to live fully
and hope to die
with dignity
swallowed whole
by the universe
from which I've come