**The New Bikini**

I hang low on her hips like a sneaky escapee.

Shoulder straps slipping, wearing end of life loosely

without pain relief.

Left too long in the salt.

All colour leached by sun and gaslit lies.

No more springy pings, no more admiring looks

or hands a-curving round my shape.

Grey threads of over-stretched elastic showing

at the tether end.

I thought she would just leave it there,

Give in, stop swimming.

But at the point of drowning she began to fight.

She splashed around, gulping air.

Then lay calmly on the water,

Working out her exit strategy.

I hang up by my saggy straps,

Abandoned on the bathroom hook.

A new bikini has arrived, coloured bright and

full of snappy twangs and twangy snaps.

I watch her try resilience on for fit.

It should hold up in choppy seas to come.