HAIR OF THE DOG THAT BIT THEM

The dog is drinking from the pool. The water's not as poisonous as alcohol must be to us. Let her slurp all the chemicals she wants; she won't make a scene after fleeing rehab. She totters around on two gimpy legs, like Redd Foxx in "Sanford and Son." A thick-skinned lifeguard, she will never drown like a teenager at 3 a.m. All this praise, you may guess, has come after a party at a broken home, with the light shining warnings on the lawn. The noble and ineffectual mascot of private unhappiness, she doesn't know the difference between a fight and a kiss goodnight, a night spent on the couch and rest. She watches over properties and the human beings they possess, the neutral ground in a trashed backyard where only hard feelings are spared.