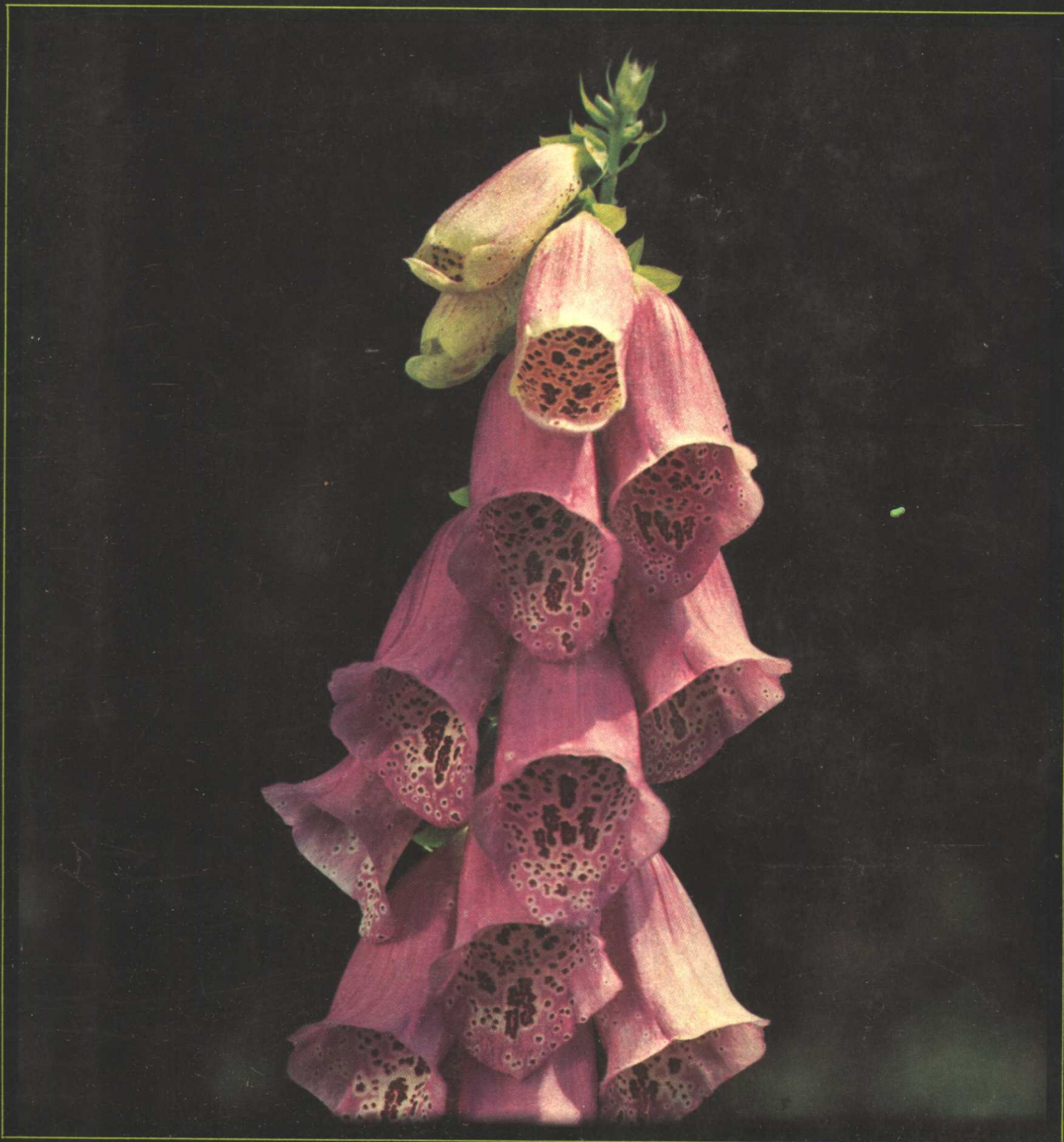


DEADLY BEAUTIFUL

THE WORLD'S MOST POISONOUS ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Nature's killers and poisoners
in all their glorious,
but dangerous, beauty



LAURENCE GADD

DEADLY BEAUTIFUL

The World's Most Poisonous
Animals and Plants

LAURENCE GADD



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(left) Indian Cobra, *Naja naja naja*



(left) Zebrafish, *Pterois volitans*



(bottom left)

Eurasian Crocus, *Colchicum speciosus*



(right)

Fly Amanita, *Amanita muscaria*

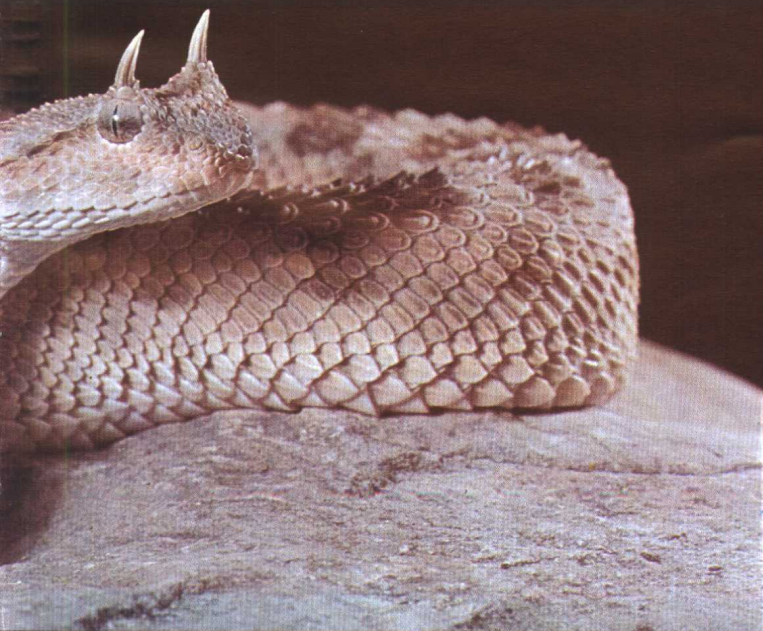


(bottom right)

Foxglove, *Digitalis purpurea*

(bottom center)

African Desert Horned Viper, *Cerastes cerastes*





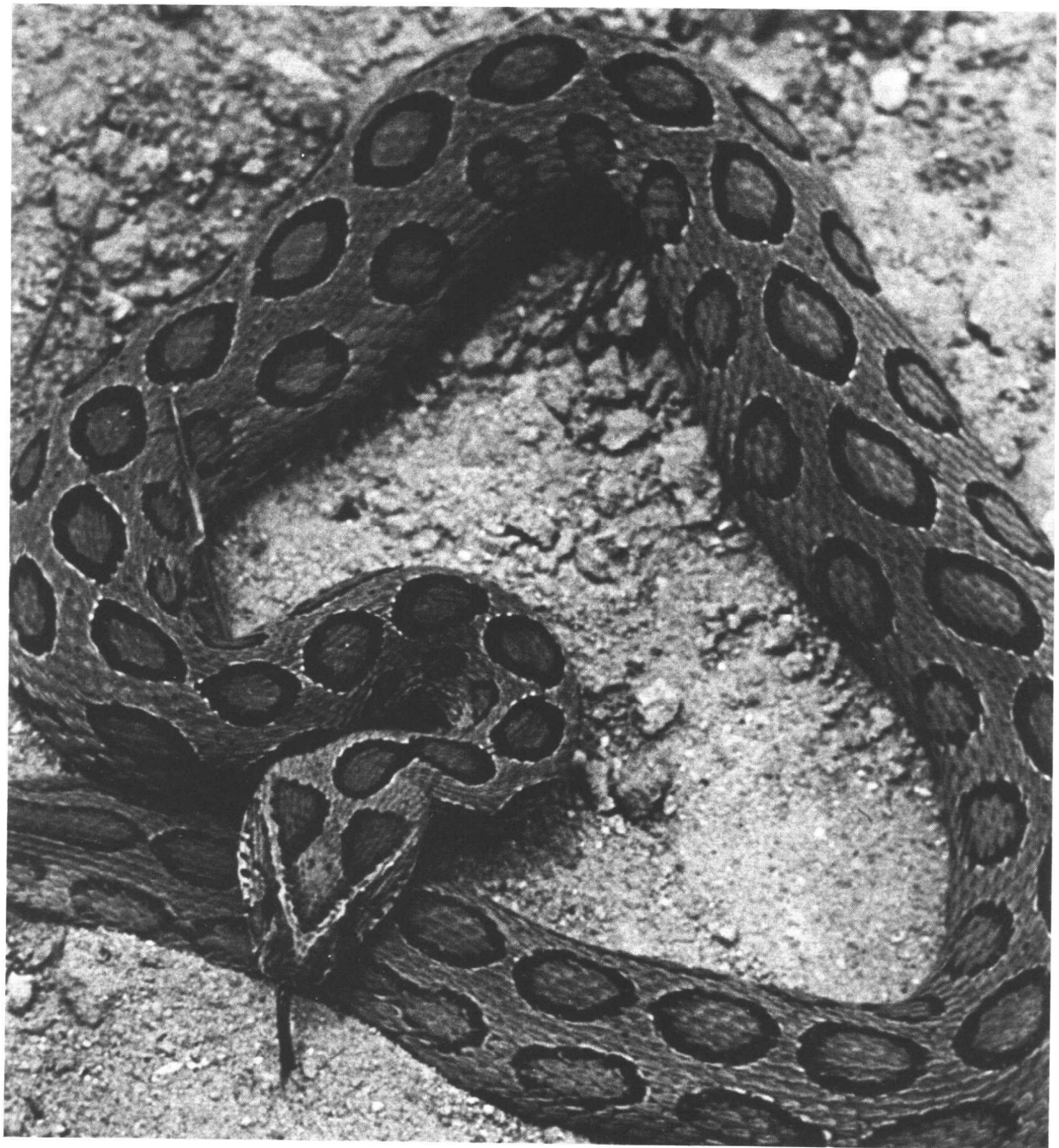


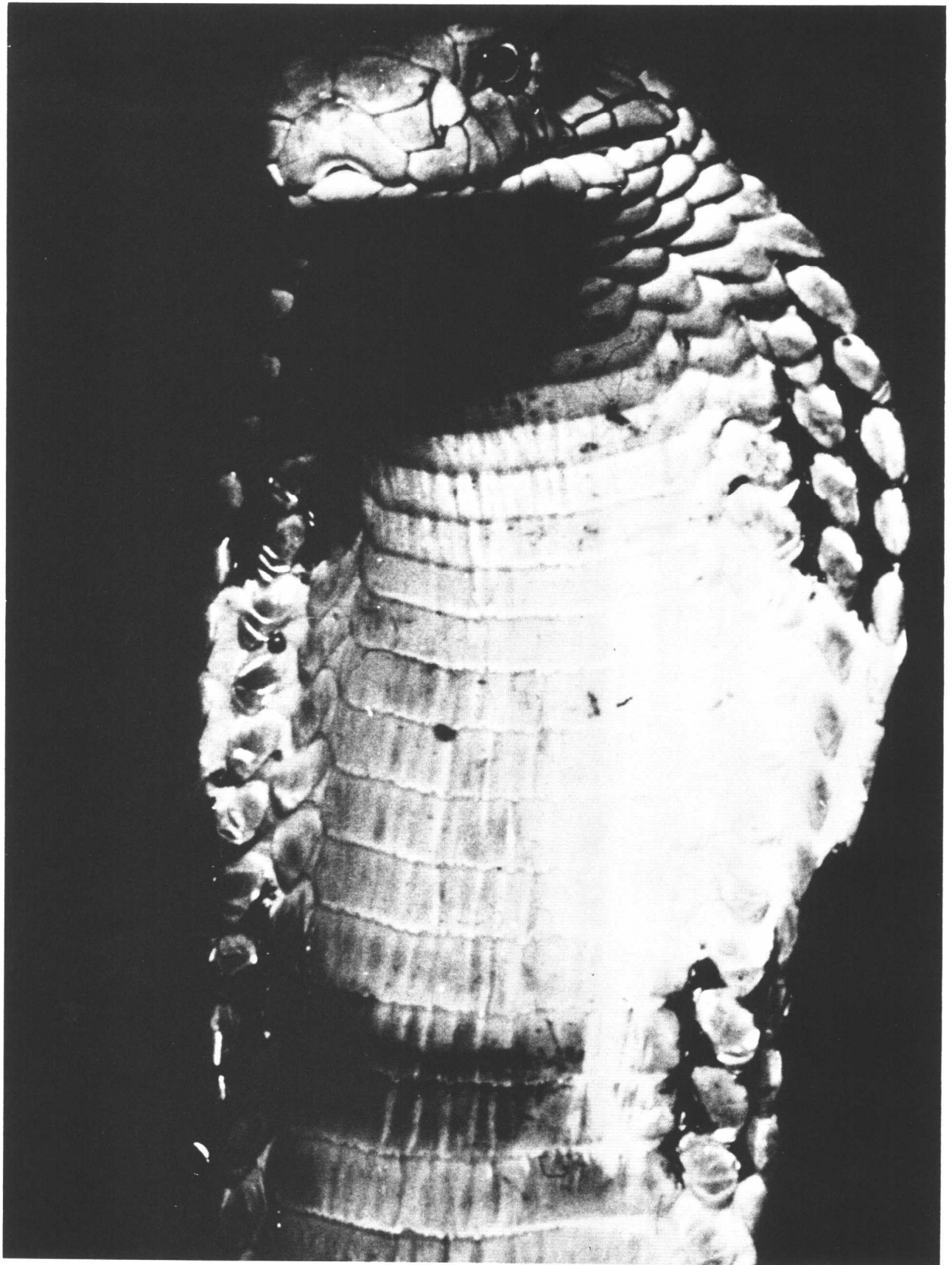
To B.S.G. who showed me beauty
and to all those others
who helped me see the other side.
L.G.











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Preface

The power of the world's most beautiful animals and plants to cause suffering and death has always fascinated and terrified man. This macabre fascination may well be man's subtle awareness of his link to predecessors in the evolutionary chain. We can only hope that man can see how even the most deadly beautiful have a place in the natural scheme and that man can learn not to destroy himself and all other living things.

This book is not a scientific work, although scientists were certainly involved in its preparation. It is more a view of one aspect of nature through the primitive eyes of modern man.

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PART ONE

**VENOMOUS
ANIMALS OF
THE WORLD**