

BALL DROP

A ten minute play

By Rich Espey

Characters

TIME STICK, a measuring device
ANALEMMA, an astronomer
ZENITH, a person who needs convincing

Time

Sunset, Winter Solstice

Place

A hilltop

SYNOPSIS: Analemma is determined to convince ZENITH that the sun will return, despite the sun's apparent retreat. ZENITH doubts that the sun will return, despite what the Time Stick says. Analemma tells ZENITH that the Time Stick says the sun will indeed not return, and ZENITH flees, determined to fall in love with night. But Analemma was right, and was lying, to see what ZENITH would do. ZENITH returns to be with Analemma.

NOTE: A Time Stick is a type of sundial used to note daily changes in the sun's apparent path across the sky.



<http://www.sspprints.com/image/94992/tibetan-time-stick-19th-century>

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BALL DROP**Rich Espey***Near sunset.**A Time Stick stands on a hill in the fading sunlight.
Someone has marked lines along the Time Stick
showing the progress of the sun on each passing
day.***TIME STICK**

Farewell heavenly body
 Celestial charioteer
 Breezing past while etching your trumpeting
 Flashing your shadow
 Nanoseconds
 I was here once!
 I am here now!
 I will be here again!

*We hear voices, offstage.***ANALEMMA**

Quick, Zenith!

ZENITH

It's rough ground, Analemma! And steep!

ANALEMMA

Just a short time left. Since you need proof so bad...

ZENITH

And it's dark! More dark than this time the last day!

ANALEMMA

Less dark! And less more dark than the day before the last day!

ZENITH

Analemma, you make less and less sense with each word. I should have stayed at the fling.

ANALEMMA

Just a few more steps, Zenith, quick. Not much time!

We see ANALEMMA and ZENITH. They are dressed in modern clothes. ZENITH might be dressed for New Year's Eve. ANALEMMA does not look ready for a party.

ANALEMMA

Here we are. The spot. Prime view. Look, the sun is still up! (*examining the lines on the Time Stick*) And the last line near crossed! See?

ZENITH

That's it? A stick? That's your proof?

ANALEMMA

My stick does not lie. Tell him.

TIME STICK

What do I know? I'm just a stick. But a stick of truth. You tell him. You explain it so much better.

ANALEMMA

I mark a line on the stick when the sun sets each night. And if you look at the way the lines work you can see that on this day the sun will stay just a tad more than the last day, and each day from now on...just a bit more sun each day.

ZENITH

A stick.

ANALEMMA

It's not just the stick. I have charts, if you want to see charts, at my home -

ZENITH

Sticks! Charts! I knew it was too good to be true. I am out of here. "She's a weird one," they all said.

ANALEMMA

Wait for the last ray and then you'll see!

ZENITH

Each day for six moons there has been less and less sun, more and more night! Face it! Six moons from now it will be all night all the time!

ANALEMMA

The sun is on her way back! My stick will prove it!

ZENITH

Night will be king. (*singing "Taps"*) "Day is done! Gone the sun! Night will win, It's no sin, to have fun!"

ANALEMMA

And then we can heal and grow and glow and...you know...just you and me, from now on, with the sun back and all. (*to Time Stick*). You must feel it! Tell him!

TIME STICK

Like I said, I'm just a stick. But if you're sure, then I'm with you.

ZENITH

Look at the sun on the run. What a wimp! While Night strives on. Drives on. Thrives on.

A wolf or something howls.

ANALEMMA

Look at what else is on the stick.

TIME STICK extends a ring. ANALEMMA places the ring on ZENITH.

For when the sun has won.

ZENITH

Let's just go back to the fling. While there's still a bit of light.

ANALEMMA

We can find our way back in the dim. And think how light our steps will be when we know that sun has won.

ZENITH

Think how sore our butts will be when we fall on those rocks all the way down in the dark. If we go now we can make it back to the fling while there's still ale left.

ANALEMMA

I just gave you a ring.

ZENITH

What's the point of a ring when it's all dark all the time?

ANALEMMA

It won't be! If you knew how to read my stick then you would know no doubt that this day is the day when day will beat night! Tell him!

TIME STICK

You act like I have some stake in all of this. Oh, I made a pun.

ANALEMMA

Or do you want night to win?

ZENITH

We all have to deal with the real world, like it or not. There's a lot of cold and not much hope here. There goes the last of your sun.

ANALEMMA looks at the TIME STICK and makes a mark.

ANALEMMA

You were right. I was wrong. (*singing "Taps"*) Day is done! Gone the sun! From the lakes, from the hills, from the sky –

I'm a fool, of course.

ZENITH

I like those who hope. It works for a while. We need some to hope. To be strong.

A roar of party noise is heard from the town below.

ANALEMMA

Well, you will miss your ale, I fear.

ZENITH

You could come with me.

ANALEMMA

I'm too weird for the mob at the fling. Don't let the ale run out on you like the sun.

ZENITH

There's a lot of ale. When they first thought the sun was done they ramped it up.

ANALEMMA

When it's night all night, what will you do?

ZENITH

Sleep more. Dance. Play. Prowl, just a bit. Growl, if I need to. You?

ANALEMMA

Oh. Pray. Try not get preyed on.

ZENITH

It's a nice ring.

ANALEMMA

Just a rock. A chip out of a mine.

ZENITH

If it weren't for the all night night...

ANALEMMA

Of course. Best get your ale.

ZENITH

Come back with me. You might as well have a laugh or two while there's still time.

ANALEMMA

I'm not of the mob.

ZENITH

They just want to cope. They say they'll learn to love the all night night. Sleep and dance and play and prowl and growl and laugh and no more tears and no more fears. The Hell with Sun! Who needs her, right?

ANALEMMA

You go have fun. I'll stay here.

ZENITH

Up on this hill? With just your stick?

TIME STICK

She could do worse.

ANALEMMA

Each day I come here to see my stick.

TIME STICK

She does. And it is the best part of my day.

ANALEMMA

And you are the first one I have shown my stick to.

ZENITH

I don't know what to say to that.

ANALEMMA

(singing "Taps") Day is done! Gone the sun! From the lakes, from the hills, from the sky –

ZENITH

(to Time Stick) What do you say to all this?

ANALEMMA

She is just a stick! Trust me! Do you trust me? If you trust me, then you should go for good.

ZENITH

I do.

ZENITH is gone. ANALEMMA looks at the mark on the Time Stick.

TIME STICK

Sun stayed longer this day this night.
I felt her photons for four full seconds more.

ANALEMMA

You felt wrong.

TIME STICK

I am a stick of truth. Why did you lie to him?

ANALEMMA

I thought you could not see.

TIME STICK

I can feel. And I can time. Why did you lie??!

ANALEMMA

Why did you not truth?

TIME STICK

Why did the day beat back the night?

ANALEMMA

There is a lot to know and a lot we do not know.

TIME STICK

I know one thing.
I was here once!
I am here now!
I will be here again!

ANALEMMA

That is three things.

TIME STICK

That is one thing.

The party noises rise again.

Do you think they know?

ANALEMMA

That the sun has won?

TIME STICK

That she is on her way back.

ANALEMMA

No. They do not have time sticks like you. To them the end is still in sight. Who do you think they want to win, deep down. Night or Day?

TIME STICK

Like I said. I'm just a stick. You are the one with the soul.

ANALEMMA

Who does he want to win?

TIME STICK

Zenith?

ANALEMMA

Who else?

ANALEMMA and TIME STICK

Day is done
Gone the sun
And the dark of my soul
Night has won -

ZENITH is there.

ZENITH

Still here.

ANALEMMA

Where else would we be?

ZENITH

It was dark on the way down.

It will get more dark dark. Go.

ANALEMMA

I tried to go.

ZENITH

Did you fall on your butt?

AMALEMMA

I left your ring.

ZENITH

Cheap stone chip.

ANALEMMA

My ring.

ZENITH

It will get much too cold up here for you in the all night night.

ANALEMMA

I can't stand the thought of you here with no one else.

ZENITH

Hey!

TIME STICK

That's not what I meant. When it goes dark for good I want you next to me.

ZENITH

Good. Good.

ANALEMMA

Oh, by the way....It won't go dark for good.

Say what?

ZENITH

I felt photons for four seconds more.

TIME STICK

The sun is on her way back?

ZENITH

ANALEMMA

Just as I said she would be. Thanks to my good ol' stick.

ZENITH

Why did you lie to me?

ANALEMMA

To see what you would do.

ZENITH

So less night than day.

ANALEMMA

Well, less more night, or more less night for a while and then, soon, more day than night.

ZENITH

Analemma, you make more and more sense with each word.

ANALEMMA

My charts are quite good. I'll show you when we get back home. Let's hike down. We'll go slow so as not to fall. (*to TIME STICK*) Thank you.

TIME STICK

I did not do much.

ANALEMMA

Still...

TIME STICK

Now that you know...will you come back?

ANALEMMA

Oh. Oh, of course, of course. (*to ZENITH*) Let's go.

TIME STICK

I will miss you.

ANALEMMA

I'll be back. Lots.

TIME STICK

Of course you will.

ZENITH

Good Night.

TIME STICK

Good Day.

ANALEMMA and ZENITH are gone.

TIME STICK

Farewell heavenly bodies
Celestial charioteer
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END OF PLAY