Detective stories have always been a favorite in literature, and now they are one of the most popular genres in TV films and series. There is something appealing about the mystery and intrigue that captivates viewers and keeps them in suspense until the case is finally solved.

But what accounts for the phenomenal success and enduring popularity of detective stories? Is it the charismatic and fearless hero and his uncanny ability to uncover the truth? Is it the action and adventure—the high-speed chases, danger, and exotic settings? Is it the psychological wit and hi-tech gadgets that the detective has at his disposal? Or is it the simple fact that the viewer knows the hero will triumph over the villain in the end?

Clearly, the TV audience enjoys the mystery and non-stop suspense of detective films. However, ironically, there is also predictability to the story that is tremendously appealing. Certain elements and sequences of events appear over and over in detective stories and are eagerly awaited by fans. TV films and series with such predictable elements are

known as formula films. The TV audience knows the plot will be puzzling and sometimes have unexpected results.

They know the hero will confront dangerous villains. They know there will be complicated steps involved in piecing together all the clues, and they are challenged to try to figure out the mystery before the detective.