After discovering that the Fictional book *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins was listed as the January selection for Oprah's Book Club, I became curious and felt I had to check the book out from the Tilden Public Library. I read it in just two days because it was so unbelievable heart breaking and hard to comprehend. It is one of those stories that I could not get out of my mind.

Lydia Quixano Perez lives a comfortable middle-class life in Acapulco, Mexico together with her husband, Sebastian, and their eight-year old son, Luca. Lydia runs a bookstore and her husband is a journalist. One day a charming customer appears in her bookstore who shares a similar interest in books that she likes. The two become close friends and reveals to her that his greatest love in his life is his daughter. Taken in by his charm, she discovers that he even writes poetry. Then one day Lydia finds out that her book loving friend is no other than the head of the latest cartel in the Acapulco area, Javier Crespo Fuentes, after which her life is never the same.

Lydia’s husband, Sebastian, publishes a story that exposes Javier of all his crimes. But after the story is published, Javier orders the murder of Lydia's family. While the family is celebrating a family birthday in the backyard, Javier's hit men enter and shoot the family. Among the sixteen people dead are Lydia's husband, mother and sister. Lydia and her son, Luca, hide in the bathtub where Javier's contract killers cannot find them.

Lydia now realizes that in order to protect her and her son, they will need to leave Acapulco immediately and try to find their way out of Mexico, and then travel north into the United States.

As mother and son flee from their comfortable home through Mexico they become instant undocumented immigrants. They jump on trains, put their lives in danger, walk miles, sleep in a variety of undesirable places, and continue to run from dangerous people connected to Javier and his cartel. As they make friends with other immigrants who they meet on the way, two sisters, with very sad stories of their own, help them jump on the train.

Do Lydia and her son, Luca reach the Unites States? And does the monster killer Javier catch up with them before they reach safety? You can find the answers to these questions and more, and read a story about the powerful and murderous cartels along with the suffering and gripping experiences of the Mexican immigrants by checking out *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummin from the library. Keep in mind, however, that as compelling as the story is, it is Fictional, and the author is not of Hispanic heritage. Regardless, it is a book you will thoroughly appreciate.

Happy Reading!