



### **Tara, by Janet Selby**

Red Tara, also known as Kurukulla, is worshipped by unhappy lovers, and is believed to be particularly successful in bewitching men and women. Her mantra repeated ten thousand times is said to bring about all of one's desires.

The Goddess Kurukulla is invoked for the controlling activities of subjugating, magnetizing, and attracting. She is extremely seductive: her red color and subjugating flower-attributes emphasize her more mundane activity of enchanting men and women, ministers and kings, through the bewitching power of sexual desire and love. The eroticism of her symbolism is further enhanced through the imagery described in her sadhana. For attracting or subjugating a man, the flower-hook and arrow are visualized as piercing his heart; and for attracting a woman these attributes are visualized as penetrating her vagina.

From a red eight-petalled lotus at the practitioner's heart arise eight red bees, which are visualized as flying out from his nostril and entering the nostril of the person to be subjugated. Here they suck the vowel syllables from that person's heart with their 'pollen gathering sucking tubes', then return with their 'nectar' to their 'hive' in the practitioner's heart. The symbolism of red bees intoxicated with honey, of red utpala flowers laden with fragrant nectar, and of the snaring, hooking, and piercing activities of Kurukulla's flower-attributes, reveal the sexual magnetism of this seductive goddess.

This red form of Tara is said to be particularly characterized by bounteousness and generosity. The flowery bow and arrow are associated with the Indian god of love, Kamadeva, half-brother to Cupid, and just as good a shot. This suggests that Red Tara causes people to fall in love with the Dharma. If we are to go far on the spiritual path, we shall need to get our emotions strongly involved with the Dharma, otherwise, however much we may agree with Buddhist ideas and ideals, we shall not be able to engage much energy in them. Red Tara's brilliant colour suggests total emotional arousal, even passion. She causes people to love truth and freedom, wisdom and compassion, so passionately that they will do whatever it takes to embrace them. If you meditate on her beautiful form, she will attract you and draw you on, leading you ever more deeply into the heart of reality. As a result, you will eventually enter the realm of pure natural awareness, and Red Tara will have lived up to her Tibetan name.